MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

AUG. 2004 • #255 • $4

SPECIAL "PUNK'S NOT DEAD, REAGAN IS" ISSUE!!! GENUINE COLLECTORS ITEM!!

PLUS: LEATHERFACE • GET IT AWAY • THE HATEPINKS
KEEN MONKEY WORK • STONEHENGE & MUCH MORE!

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

MOURNING REAGAN'S DEATH & DREAMING OF THATCHER'S

ROB COONS

- SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS-Kängnäve-LP
- ARTIMUS PYLE-Fucked from Birth-LP
- FORWARD-Fucked Up-12"
- NK6-No Back No-EP
- AWOL-Another Way of Living!-EP
- AI-Ain't No Slaves-EP
- TECHNOCRACY-Price of Killing Machine-LP
- STRAIGHT TO HELL-We Will Bury You-LP
- SKARP-Bury Your Dead-CD
- PAINTBOX-live

ARWEN CURRY

EXTREMELY SAD ABOUT REAGAN'S DEATH

PAUL CURRAN

- FOUR EYES-Rock & Roll Playing-CD & live
- STREBERS-Oga for Oga-12"
- FIYA-Make Joy, Make Strength-12"
- CZOLGOSZ/EN LA OLLA-split EP
- TRANSLATORS/FELDMANS-split EP
- M.O.T.O-LP / MOUSEROCKET – LP
- HATEPINKS-Parasites Like Me-LP
- DEAN DIRG-The Last Kid on the Block-12"
- PETROGRAD-Trigger Happy-CD
- V/A-Bored Teenagers Vol. 3

JONATHAN FLOYD

- ARTIMUS PYLE-Fucked from Birth-LP
- M.O.T.O- Kill MOTO-LP
- LOST SOUNDS-Demos & Outtakes Vol. 2-3xEP
- THE SMUT PEDDLERS-Coming Out-LP
- FIYA-Make Joy, Make Strength-12"
- FOUR EYES-Rock & Roll Playing-CD
- HATEPINKS-Parasites Like Me-LP
- THE TRIGGERS-Bad Dream-EP
- PIRANHAS-live
- TILTWHEEL/VENA CAVA-live

JEFF HEERMANN

- MANIKINS – LP
- BLACK LIPS-We Did Not Know-LP
- LOCOMOTIONS - CD
- SUNDAY DRUNKS-On the Prowl-CD
- MANGANZOIDES-Radio Komodo-CD
- MOUSEROCKET – LP
- LOST SOUNDS-Demos & Outtakes Vol. 2-3xEP
- THE KNIGHTS OF THE NEW CRUSADE-CD
- MORNING SHAKES-LP
- SCAT RAG BOOSTERS-Charlie's Dirt Road-EP

KENNY KAOS

- ATOM SMASHERS / DELOREANS – split EP
- V/A-Rip Off Records Third Wave of Hits-LP
- THE SMUT PEDDLERS-Coming Out-LP
- THE FEELERS- Fuhrers New Miniskirt-EP
- HATEPINKS-Parasites Like Me-LP
- MANIKINS – LP
- DEAN DIRG-The Last Kid on the Block-12"
- THE TRIGGERS-Bad Dream-EP
- PROTEX-All We Wanna Do Is Rock 'n' Roll-LP
- RADIO ONE / DIE HUNNS – split 45

CAROLYN KEDDY

- HATEPINKS-Parasites Like Me-LP
- THE KODIAKS-Watch My Soul-EP
- THE TRIGGERS-Bad Dream-EP
- M.O.T.O- Kill MOTO-LP
- REATARDS-Live-LP
- DEAN DIRG-The Last Kid on the Block-12"
- TEEN HEAT-Everybody Move-LP
- MORNING SHAKES-LP
- THE KNIGHTS OF THE NEW CRUSADE-CD
- PIRANHAS-live / The Corporation-film

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 159-163, 166, 168-172, 174-175, 178-181, 184-210, 213-227, 229-254 are as stated above in subscription info.
See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.

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(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

RAY LUJAN

FLAMINGO 50-My Reason-CD
PETROGRAD-Trigger Happy-CD
STRIP MUSIC-Desperation-CD
GEISHA GIRLS-12" / BURNING IMAGE-CD
THE LOCOMOTIONS-She's Gotta Go-EP
BENT OUTTA SHAPE-12"
BALZAC-Atom Age Vampire in 308-EP
ARMITAGE SHANKS-Urinal Heap-CD
JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT-Fade to Black-CD
AVENGERS -live / THE CHECKERS-live

BOBBY MANIC

THE BOYS-Complete Punk Singles Collection-LP
PROTEX-All We Wanna Do Is Rock 'n' Roll-LP
SOME ACTION-45 / THE FOUR EYES-CD
THE LOCOMOTIONS-She's Gotta Go-EP
THE HELPER MONKEYS-No Release-CD

WILL RISK

LIGHTS OUT-Get Out-EP
HOSTILE TAKEOVER-Youth Grenade-EP
BENT OUTTA SHAPE-12" & live
FIYA-Make Joy, Make Strength-12"
PRACTICE-More Practice-EP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

GEISHA GIRLS-12"
PHOENIX FOUNDATION-CD
PRACTICE – "More Practice" EP
MARY CELESTE – "Our Guernica" CD
FIYA-12" / DEAN DIRG-12"
SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS-Kängnäve-LP
ARTIMUS PYLE-Fucked from Birth-LP
BULLET TRAIN TO VEGAS-EP
TILTWHEEL-live
MISSION OF BURMA-live

DONNA POOLE

FOUR EYES-Rock & Roll Playing-CD & live
SICK FITS – Mirror Creeps EP
SOME ACTION-Some Action/Hurt Tonight-45
GEISHA GIRLS-12"
THE SMUT PEDDLERS-Coming Out-LP
GAUZE-City Rockers-EP
V/A-Rip Off Records Third Wave of Hits-LP
FIYA-Make Joy, Make Strength-12"
SACRAMENTO / ZODIAC KILLERS-live
TEENAGE HARLETS-live

BRUCE ROEHRS

NK6-No Back No-EP / DESOLATION-Awake-EP
BRODY'S MILITIA -Tribute Through Butchery-EP
ASPHALT-EP / ARTIMUS PYLE-LP
DÖDSDÖMD-LP / BLOOD FOR BLOOD-LP
CHARGE 69-LP / CLOSE CALL-EP
TECHNOCRACY-LP / GAUZE-EP
WOLFBRIGADE-A D-Beat Odyssey-12"
THE SMUT PEDDLERS-Coming Out-LP
STRAIGHT TO HELL-We Will Bury You-LP
SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS-LP

MIKE THORN

DESOLATION-Awake-EP / DÖDSDÖMD-LP
GAUZE-City Rockers-EP
HZERO-Dias De Rabia, Noches De Furia-EP
I ATTACK-LP / NK6-No Back No-EP
JOHN THE BAKER & THE MALNOURISHED-CD
PETROGRAD-Trigger Happy-CD
SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS-Kängnäve-LP
WOLFBRIGADE-A D-Beat Odyssey-12"
ARTIMUS PYLE-LP / THE TRIGGERS-EP
BURY THE LIVING-live

RYAN WELLS

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT/NUCLEAR FAMILY-split LP
GAUZE-City Rockers-EP
REATARDS-Live-LP
THE LOCOMOTIONS-She's Gotta Go-EP
THE TRIGGERS-Bad Dream-EP
M.O.T.O- Kill MOTO-LP
UXA-Illusions of Grandeu-LP
BLACK LIPS-We Did Not Know-LP
THE FEELERS- Fuhrers New Miniskirt-EP
LOST SOUNDS-Demos & Outtakes Vol. 2-3xEP

ZINE TOP TEN

The Fury/Anthems for a Doomd Youth #12
On Fire #4
Riot 77 #7
Roctober #38
Trust #106
What's Up Bra #1
Bald Cactus #22
Green Anarchy #16
Square One Agian / Voices Wake Us #2,11
Straint #8

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Too Many Records, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Fun People, Fat, Drunk & Stupid, BrandNewUnit, Death Wish Kids.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04 The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah

#252/May '04 Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos, SE Asia, Germany, Iceland.

#253/June '04 Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI, Texas, Germany, UK, New Hampshire

#254/July '04 No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston, Germany

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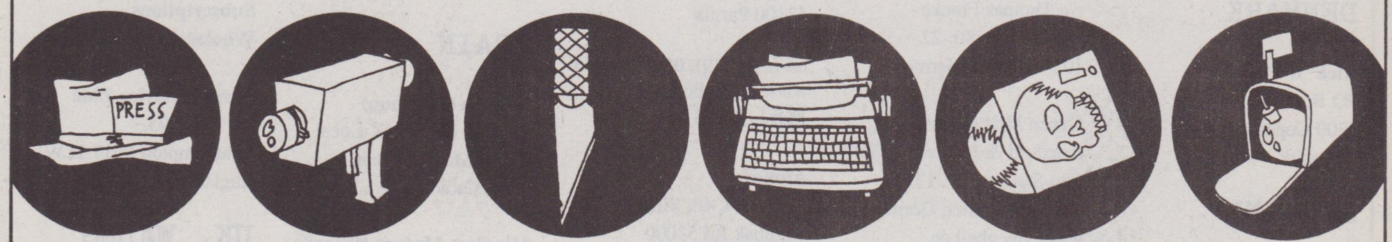

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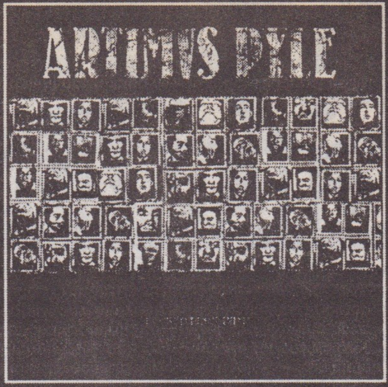

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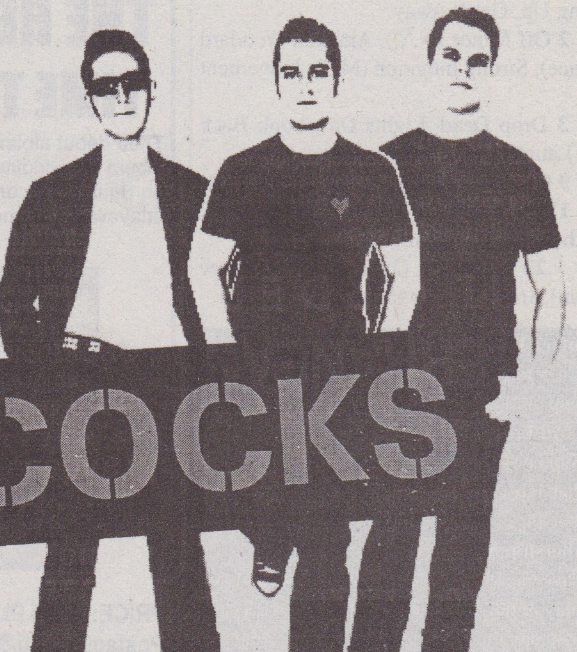

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May 28 scAVENGERS, The Plus Ones, Jericho (Va), Deadly Weapons, Triple Nipple
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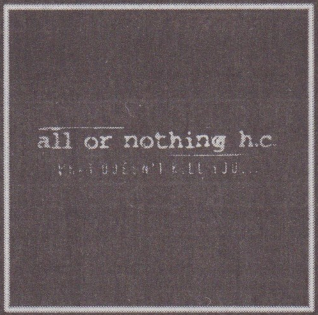

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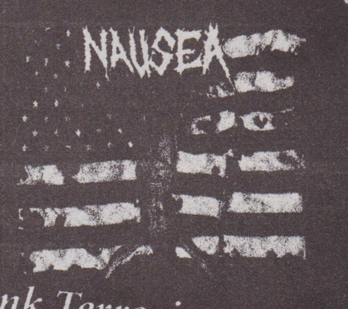

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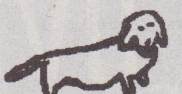

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LETTERS

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Dear *MRR*—

Like most people I would first like to start off by saying thank you for the review of my zine, *Allthatcreepeth,* which appeared in your July 2004 #254. You have usually always had kind words to say about my projects, even this time around, well sort of.

I know I should not be writing this, due to the fact I may be opening up a new can of worms somehow, but seriously—reviewer JP writes—"I did find the editor's usage of race as a descriptor of people a little troubling. I don't think that saying 'a black guy' or 'this Puerto Rican woman' helps me understand these people as the complex, dynamic people that I am sure they are, but instead plays into the long standing stereotypes that white people hold about people of color."

Okay, umm, give me a fucking break!!!! Was that really necessary for JP to go into? I actually find it troubling that JP finds it troubling.

Scenario equals this. It is taken from an article where I was in the emergency room, barely able to breathe. The other two people that were in the room with me were "This old Black guy that looked like he cut his hand pretty bad, the other was this Puerto Rican lady that…" and I go into length about her moaning and stomach ailments.

I'm sorry if I would have been able to breathe better I may have went over and asked the black guy how his hand got so messed up or asked the Puerto Rican lady her name and offered to go buy her some Tums or whatnot.

Seriously I think you are trying to look waayyyy too much into this.

How come you didn't call me out for being ageist when a few sentences later I said "This old guy came in and did the tongue depressor thing to me?"

But I guess it's actually all balanced out when earlier in the story I talked about being outside a Mobil station and saw a "Black man talking to a White man"?

Yes they are descriptors!!!! It's who I fucking saw!!! Am I insinuating that all Puerto Rican ladies have stomach ailments? Am I insinuating that all old black men have fucked up hands?

Or earlier in the story where I talk about the handyman Rico. Did I constantly refer to him as "Some Latino/Mexican/Puerto Rican/Etc"? No, you know why? Because he was somebody I actually met and got to know.

Earlier in my zine when I talk about having autographs, did you see me refer to Hector "Macho" Camacho as "Some Latino boxer"? No, because there was no need to, he is someone famous and known, well used to be.

I guess all in all the only thing that troubles me is that people will think twice about ordering my zine b/c of the later part of the review!

Thanks JP!!!

Jeremy/allthatcreepeth@hotmail.com

Jeremy—Actually, I agree with Josh, the reviewer in question. He merely points out that you use race as if it is sufficient to describe someone, and lets people decide for themselves what they think about that. You find it troubling that Josh finds it troubling that you do this? Well I find it troubling that you were so troubled by his troubledness to write this incredibly defensive letter! So there! —Anandi

Dear *MRR*—

I am so sorry to hear the inspiration for the Dead Kennedys has passed away. "I am Emperor George Bush" doesn't seem to have the same ring as Ronald Reagan "born again with fascist cravings" although you could apply the song to both easily.

Shame to read about Discharge losing out to Sanctuary Recordings in issue #248 of *MRR*. A warning to all would be punk bands about who you deal with when you are recording stuff. Discharge are one of many bands through out the whole planet that has been ripped off. I think if it is possible try and set up your own label and distribution then do so—perhaps some of your more sharper readers might have tips to pass on to all would be bands who wish to start up their own label etc.

So what if it is small scale—remember big business needs us; we do not need them—D.I.Y. not E.M.I.!

I don't expect to see my letter in print or for you to reply to it but please publish it, as I believe all bands need a helping hand in what is certainly a cutthroat business.

Meanwhile….stay loud proud n punk!!!

Gary Crowe
53 0xford Street
Watford, Herts
WD18 OES
UK

Maxi Rocker—

This letter isn't to the almighty zine I love but to the dildo hard core/punk rock kids I ran into today. Well let me first tell you why I'm writing. Not being a young punk anymore my body is changing. If I eat at Roberto's Taco Shop I will become fat. If I become fat me & the almighty punk babe Bethanator with not be able to have group sex with cross dressing Rockabilly chicks & punk rock studs, but this is besides the point. Sure you might think this story is made up, but it's true. So as my daughter Caroline says "1,2,3, Let's Go!"

So I was jogging down Wigwam, sweat was forming, I was having thoughts of $1 Coors Lites at Ellis Island & I was wearing my old Misfits T-shirt. Well as I jogged up to Ford & Las Vegas blvd. & a carload of straight edge Converge listening pussies start to make fun of me. Why because I was old, jogging & punk! Sure I stood my ground & informed the pussies who are afraid of a beer that they were posers!

I'm not writing because I'm angry because they made fun of me, because shit I'm an old punk who fucks Pizza Hut make babes, I'm a Sri Lankan Punk, and I have a somewhat of a small cock, being made fun of comes with the territory. By the way I'm also not afraid of pussy straight edge kids who have picnics!

The reason I'm writing is these kids made fun of me for exercising. If these kids are anti-exercising this will create so many fat punk dudes it's unreal. The thought of double penetrating Bethany with the next Pig Champion is fucking gross. For one thing I need all you skinny kids to bulk up so you're good looking & you need to work out so you're not fat. This only goes for the boys, all you girls stay the way you are chunky, fat, what ever you all look good as long as you keep it real.

Shit onto other news the band Diciembre Gris stayed at my house this weekend & were the best houseguests, they did all my housework & were a lot of fun. These guys party more than any other band so check them out soon before a band member dies, & that is no joke, just ask Kurt from the Mapes/Heroines he will tell you within' the year there will be a D.G. member dead of a drug abuse or alcohol poisoning!

See You all In The Pit!!!!
—Karl Bakla!

MRR—
Lately, I have been thinking about the state of affairs regarding punk rock in Northeast PA. There are plenty of shows, more than enough bands, a decent amount of venues and a handful of bored kids who want to rock out. Actually, most don't dance, but whatever.

Nobody ever knows what I am ever talking about. Most of the "punk" kids are not any different than anyone else I know. Most don't subscribe to any sort of counter culture lifestyle. While most are atheist, which seems to be a punk standard because of punk's anti-authoritarian perspective, most couldn't turn down McDonald's dollar menu if they tried.

Anyway, the beloved "scene" seems to be about change. Around my neck of the woods, it's about getting drunk and going to shows. People look at me cross-eyed when I say the "Z" word, "zines".

I've been trying to explain zines for years. I've always had trouble putting a zine out that looked good or I felt was sometimes worth reading. Anywho, Pennsylvania (and myself) seems to be lacking in the zine department. I'm sure that someone is reading this thinking I'm some sort of an idiot and I do not have any idea what's up. I know of very few PA zines. One of which is *Chumpire*, which I understand has expanded from its single sheet format.

I want someone to write me telling me I'm wrong and lost about the zine scene in PA. After all, the Philly Zine Fest is looking to be the single highlight of my summer, besides all those late night walks and conversations waiting to be had with great people waiting to be met.

If you're going to be in the area in July, Philly Zine Fest is going to be a weekend long event—July 9th-11th. Check out geocities.com/phillyzinefest for more details.

I'm also learning how to layout the zines I've written over time so that I can put them out and meet all those great zinesters, pen pals, and road trips waiting to be had. Yea, I couldn't figure out layout, even screwing around.

It just sucks living far away from people who do zines and needs to learn things hands on from watching someone rather than internet resources.

If you're from PA and do a zine, drop me a line. Even if you're not, drop me a line anyway.
—Stu
240 E. Kline Ave
Lansford, Pennsylvania 18232.

Maximum Rock N Roll—
Hello you all! I just received the June issue. I'm very happy and excited to have another issue but one thing, my ad was published late and I've been transferred to a new state hospital since. If you could please print my new address, it is: Greg Busby #053986-6, Napa State Hospital (Q-9), Napa, California, 94558-6293.

Also, here is a sorta poem I wrote:
One upon a time there was a punk boy that liked Oi!
And could run with the best of skins in his day.
Havoc and violence, drunken unguidance,
Lost his identity.
Now he's a lonely old convict,
Wishing for some correspondence,
From good ole' *Maximum Rocknroll* family.

Can't wait for the next issue. Thanks!
Greg Busby
2100 Napa Vallejo Hwy
Napa, CA 94558

Dear *MRR*—
I'm writing this to let everyone who reads this know about the christian exodus (christianexodus.org). This is a group of extreme right-wing conservative anti-abortion, anti-gay christians.

Their goal is to get christians from all over to move to South Carolina (my state). Then they will install their politicians in office, take over the government and break away from the union civil war style and have their own perfect christian country where everyone is happy and there is no room for free thought. This place is bad enough as it is. It's not called the bible belt for no reason. There are seriously as many churches in my town as there are traffic lights. I can see why they would want to come here. When I first saw this I thought it was funny until I started reading the forums. Then I saw how serious these people are. I am writing this to get as many people as possible to go to this website, sign up and post in the forums. There are a lot of people around here who post anti-christian exodus messages and they usually get deleted. If we all flood their site there is no way they can stop them all. Please tell everyone you know about this. Your state could be next.
—J
melodicsquash@yahoo.com

Maximum Rock & Roll—
Greetings and Salutations from California Correctional Center in Susanville! I am writing this letter to voice my disgust about an article I read in a newspaper last night. The article was about the Conservative, Right Wing "Punk" Movement that is rearing its ugly head in our scene. I could not believe what I was reading. The article started out talking about a guy who has multiple piercing, tattoos, a mohawk, and just generally looks like the punk stereotype. So far it was not bad. Then they went on to talk about his

political views, which were your general Pro-Bush, Pro-Life, Republican, Capitalist, Ignorant Sheep—you get the point.

How could something so wrong happen in our beloved scene? It is bad enough we are the haven for sell-out bands like Blink 182 and Green Day, and stores like Hot Topic, but this is a too much. I know it is the work of only a few who label themselves as punx that are doing this, but I still feel it is an outrage. I got into the scene because I see so much wrong in the world, and would like to do my part to change it. I have been in a few bands, (Contrived Obedience being one for anyone in FL reading this), and have done work for Food Not Bombs, the needle exchange, and DLF, plus have fought for Animal Liberation and many other just causes. I am an Anarchist, even though that has been tainted by society and is just seen as Teenage Rebellion, and not a threat anymore. I still believe in Humanity, and that one day we all may wake up and see what our Government, (the Corporations), is doing to our world.

I have done my fair share of hurt, also. I have burned many bridges with many people I care about because of my addictions. I am very ashamed of this, and have been working to better myself. I have not done any heroin for over two years, nor any other hard drugs. The crutch I need to let go of now is alcohol, which is the reason I am writing from prison, and not from under my bridge where I should be, (squatters rights!).

I just wanted to write and voice my disgust, and frustration. If anyone needs a pen-pal feel free to write me, and I promise I will write back. Make sure the letters are PC or Big Brother here will not let me have them. Take it easy!

Kevin Machado
v-14528 ca-04051
PO Box 2500
Susanville, CA 96127-2500

MRR—

Instead of ranting, we have decided to tell you straight. We are boycotting *MRR* until Mykel Board is gone. This is being done in reaction to his column in issue #251 April 2004. Child molestation is rape. We will not support a zine that supports this atrocity.

Thank you.
Anonymous.

Dear *MRR*—

Thanks to HM for reviewing our CD "Sweatshop. I'd like to set the record straight, in the review it said not to be confused with Dead Steelmill from Chicago. Well, we are Dead Steelmill from Chicago!

For the past 18 years punk has ran in our veins, not like other bands and people who thought it was a phase. We may be up in age, and ache here are there, but we can still kick ass. We had our ups and downs and went through several members but we've paid our dues. If interested in interviewing the band please contact our website deadsteelmill.com.

Cornorator
Chicago.

MRR—

After many years as an avid reader of *MRR*, I've decided to write and simply compliment your staff on what is a consistently good read. I have always enjoyed the scene reports. Here in Alaska we have the biggest joke-of-a-scene.

With bands that are either trying their hardest to be Greensumblink-charlotte4182 or Linkinstaindbizkit, the choices for original music are limited (this place is also the home of the greatest number of those musical leaches, er, vampires called "Cover Bands"). Yet, for every dozen or so pretenders we have some damn fine artists. To name a few, there is Stubby's Crack Co., The Flying Falcons, Eu Vasahm, Spitshine, Omega Something and Citizen Erased. I do consider the band of which I am part, The Ambition, included in that list because, like those previously named, we are offering an original product where hardly any exists.

(This brings me to my theory of "Big Bang in Music" where good stuff comes out of nothing. Somewhat similar in design to the Big Bang in the construction of the universe where creation came from nothing, there is nothing in Alaska that would even indicate that there could or ever would be some form of entertainment outside the dreaded Deadhead bands of which there are many in this musical wasteland. Yuk).

Since few outside bands put Alaska on their tour roster, we rarely get to play with the super talent that comes with playing regular gigs in front of an audience other than friends. Most shows that feature national (or international, natch) acts are put together by a local promoter with a little disposable scratch. Even then, the promoters, to help defer some of the cost from their pocket, make deals with local bars (a.k.a., the Devil). Subsequently, some of the better outside acts only play to an over-21 crowd. Of all the places in which I've lived, I would hate to be under-21 in Alaska (unless you like rap or techno, you haven't any choices for music).

Oh, the catfight between Bill Florio and Wells Anarchy was hilarious—kind of a "He Said, She Said." Though, it did seem contrived and forced, it was, nonetheless, the high point of my day (laughing my ass off). Further, Rall Deal, Anonymous Boy and Ransom Notes were (as always) the best way to end my work week after seven days of dealing with the retail world (two diplomas and I work minimum wage. Yee-fucking-ha). I am not at all surprised how many people in which I engage conversation are totally against Bush and thought this whole week of Reagan canonization was such a sham. Now, if I can only get these people to the polls!

Much respect to you guys (and gals) for your work although a man much smarter than me once wrote that "to have a job you truly love, you'll never work a day in your life." Damn fine words, that. Later,

T. Ottinger
tcottinger@yahoo.com

MRR—

Hi. Great mag, been reading for years. Unfortunately, I have a bone to pick with Negative Tom. You reviewed the Breakfast/Nihon Noen split EP. I just wanted to say how much I disagreed with your comment on how Breakfast reminds you "a lot of Hit Me Back". I just don't see it. I can't think of where you could draw that comparison. Let's see...Breakfast: fast, thrashy, unpredictable. Hit me Back: fast, thrashy, "been done before" as Carl Cordova said in his review of the HMB/Out Of Vogue split EP.

I don't mean to trash HMB, but criticism is part of being in a band and releasing records. I love Breakfast. Their records have been nothing short of amazing and their sound progresses

with every release. I've hesitantly picked up HMB's releases and was not all that impressed. I've seen them play live plenty of times and they do a good job of being energetic, but that's about it. Breakfast destroyed live in LA—they have all the necessary components of what makes a band truly great (musicianship, energy, enthusiasm and they are some of the nicest people ever). I have nothing but respect for both bands and their accomplishments and goals. But I just had to voice my opinion as to how bad of a comparison that was. Thanks!

—Juan, LA, Ca.
JPSpazz666@aol.com

PS—If this comment gets printed, I would just like to thank Yo Soeda of Breakfast for hooking me up with a copy of the Nihon Noen split EP. Yo Soeda is the man!!! Come back to the US soon!!

Hey all at *Maxi-Mom Rock & Roll*—

What's a guy to do who's stuck in small town Bushesque Amerika? My nearest big town is Fresno. (Yes, that's Cali) We're 427,00 people. We have a lot; we're a town like any other with good and bad stuff. We have three shopping malls and an artist district. William Saroyan grew up here. The band S.T.U.N., who're punk, are from Fresburg. Anyway, enuff about Fresno. I'll let the individual decide.

I live in Reedley, a small town of about 21-22,000 idiots. Small-minded negative critical morons.

I often mail off for stuff, or I go to Fresno—I just hate waiting. PPD prices and outfits that have shipping and the tax included are on the rite track. I order from Kung-Fu Records one time. It took them over a month, 31 to 38 days, to send off a friggin' CD. In their catalog, it states order are shipped out in 48-hours, expect 2-3 weeks. What a bunch of fuck-witted dodos! I now go with people I know and trust! Like TAANG! Records in San Diego are good. They're all right. Anyway my point is, if a mail-order company looks flaky, stay away. I found the best way to order is with a credit card or money order, or well-hidden cash with a security envelope. If a person or CD or clique feels they need to make you crawl, they are weak and petty individuals. They're making up for love acceptance and security. The best way to deal, is 1) ignore it, 2) or confront it, or 3) slough it off. Thanx for making sure I got my shirt, you were very timely. Your zine is diverse, exemplary and a joy to read. Very truly yours,

—Jon Kurtti
1780 NE Ave
Reedley, CA (Fresno, CA)
93654-8812

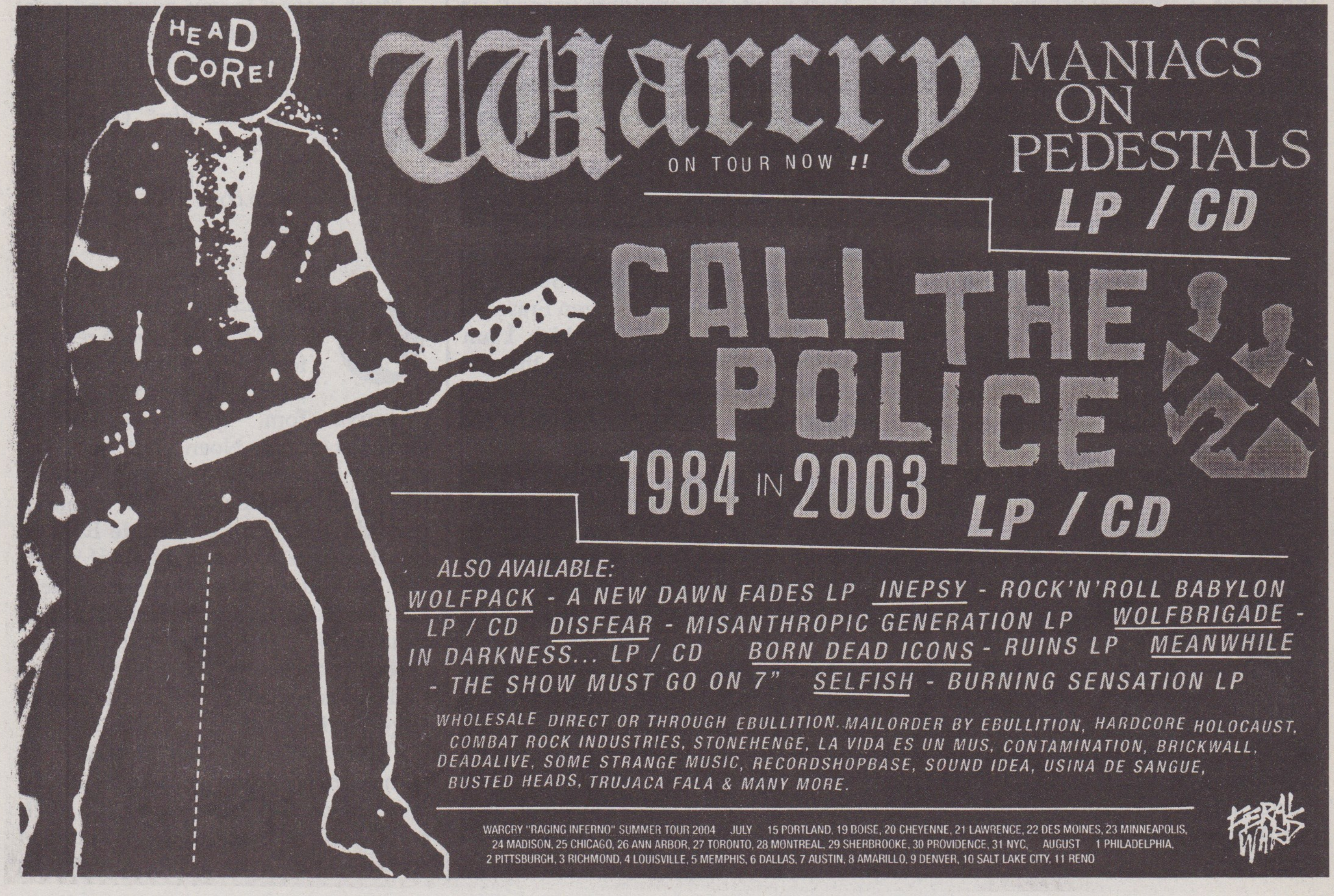
PS—Internet, that's so punk! Paypal? Way to go mannn! Daddy's buying his lifestyle for his little boy!

PPS—All mail companies should have a fone, voicemail, or fax so you can reach them. I like the old fashioned best, newer doesn't always mean better.

Dear *MRR*—

Hey. Let me first off say...punk rock. I just went to my first real punk rock show Saturday night. It was the best thing I have ever seen. I met so many people there, and I felt so accepted and excited. I felt happy again to be alive. Thank you punk rock.

—Daniel fucking Lewis
aka Dickhead Richy
fenriz_goat@yahoo.com



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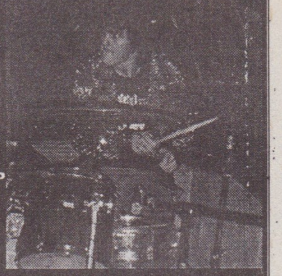

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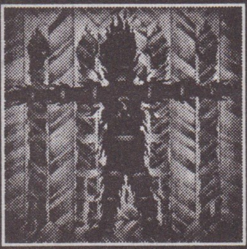

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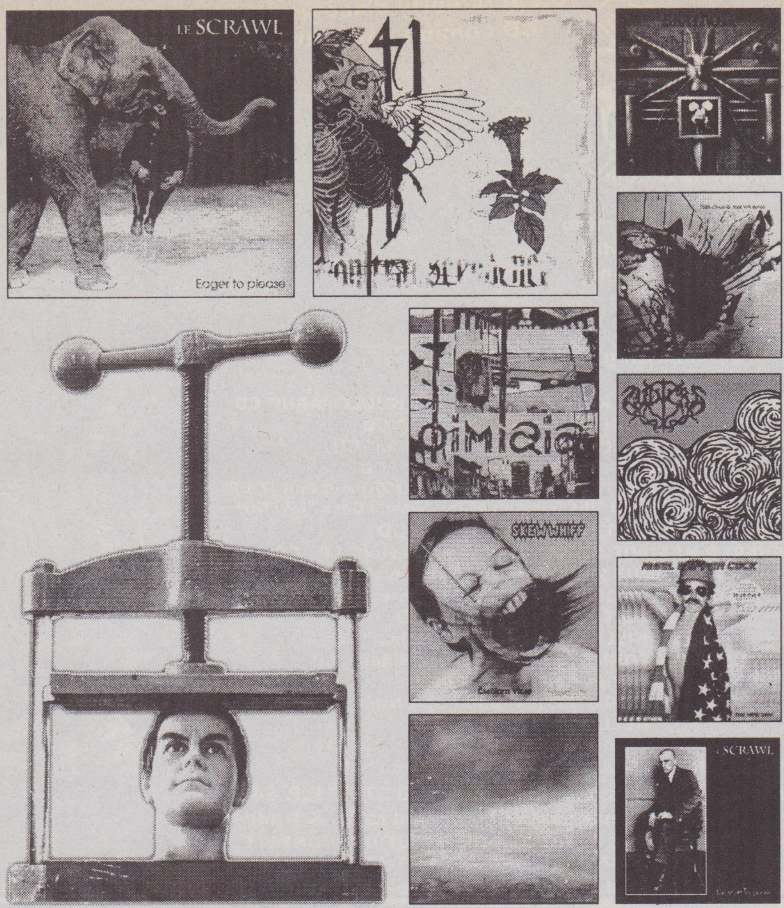

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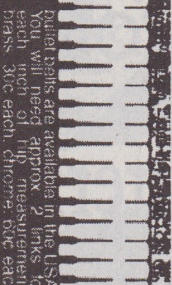

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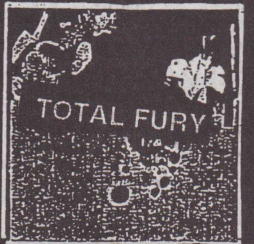

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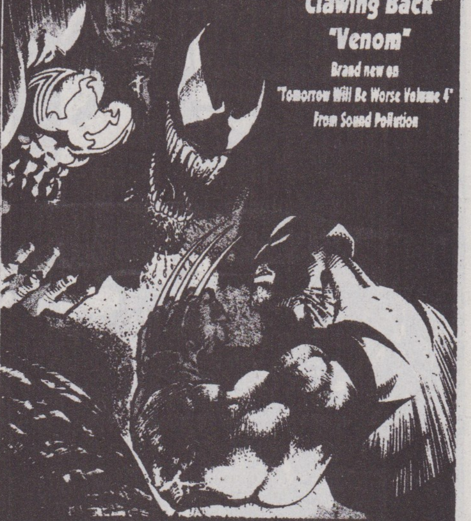

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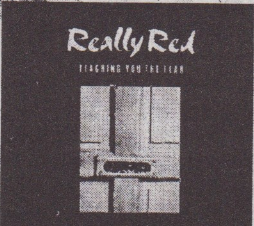

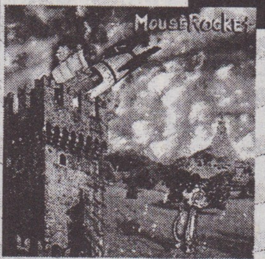

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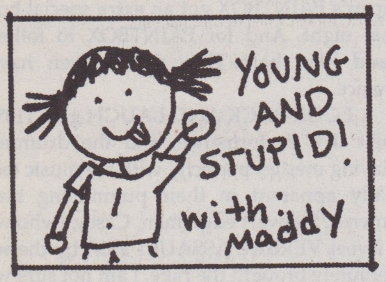


For the past few months, I've been unemployed for the first time since I was eleven years old. And no, for me, having grown up in a family that was always worried about money and usually broke, being poor isn't some "liberating" totally punk rock thing. Nope, being poor means worrying and worrying means stress, and stress means...I end up getting shingles! Seriously!

And, lest anyone think that the economy is improving, last week when I called Manpower (a temp agency), they told me that there's a two-week wait just to get an interview! Recovery? I don't think so!

So, I've been thinking about work even more than usual, which, if you're me, is like Charles Bukowski thinking more about women or Jerry Farwell thinking more about Teletubbies. And, in the midst of all this "thinking" (read: sitting in my room listening to END OF THE WORLD NEWS waiting for the elusive employment-related phone call), I thought: Why not make a mix tape full of punk songs about work?

Seeing as how my only plans for the next several weeks involved sleeping and eating lots of generic Lucky Charms, I immediately embarked on this quest, going through all my records and CDs, picking out every punk song about work I could find, and then, I realized: I do not even have enough songs for a 60 minute tape!

"This can't be!" I thought! I mean, I know that my record collection is not enormous, probably not even big by *MRR* columnist standards, but its pretty respectable, and includes everything from early 80s hardcore to pop punk to garage rock...and yet, almost nothing about work! Tons of songs about The Man, The System, love, drugs, sex, politics, and even food, but work? Nope! Even if I am missing lots of work-related songs, my research tells me that songs about work make up about one percent of all punk songs. Strange!

And, the vast majority of the songs I did find were really general—either "I hate work" or "Work is draining my will to live." And, while a lot of these songs are great, I'm a sucker for specific songs—about any subject. (One of my favorite songs of all time is "Hoxha" by CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE which contains lyrics like "Enver Hoxha/Head of Central Committee/Communist Party of Albania/No more Zog, no more Emmanuel III/Independent Albania under a single party." Ridiculous!) I think I've discovered the most rare punk rock genre: songs about specific jobs.

There was a time when people wrote tons of songs about work, and most of them were really specific. There's songs about shipbuilding, mining, farming, making cars, chain-gang prison labor, plantation work, and being a pirate. If you can think of an old-school profession, there's probably a song for it.

But there aren't any songs about working at Wal-Mart or as a medical research subject. There aren't many songs at all about working in a cubicle, working as a temp, a manicurist, a substitute teacher, or a maid. And, although there are a lot of middle-class punks out there, there are also a lot of punks who work in these shit jobs, and yet, almost no one writes songs about it. Not glorious enough? Not cool or "rock and roll" enough? I don't know the reason, but you have to admit, it's a little odd.

Meanwhile, there's a lot of new folk-influenced punk bands, some of whom I like a lot, but even those bands tend to sing old songs about being a railroad worker or a miner instead of writing songs about the jobs that most people have today. Besides, you don't need a banjo (much as I love banjos—and I do!) to sing folk songs. DILLINGER FOUR writes folk songs, and the day that Paddy whips out a banjo is the day I start laughing—really, really hard.

Despite these difficulties, I did manage to put together a 60-minute tape by including some non-punk favorites. Of course, there are thousands of non-punk songs about work to choose from. (If you're interested in labor songs, let me know and I'll make you a great tape!) And I'm sure I've left out tons of good songs I've never heard (at least I *hope* so!). But, taking your standard punk record collection, and subtracting the songs I really don't like (I could never stand ELVIS COSTELLO's "Welcome to the Working Week"), I came up with the following:

Side A!

"He's a Shithead (yeah yeah)" by DILLINGER FOUR! Let's get things started out right with a song by the best punk band right now, hands down! A song about a bus driver strike in Minneapolis and a lazy asshole who complained about having to ride his bike 'cause the bus wasn't running. Great line: "I hope you freeze on your bike riding home tonight." DILLINGER FOUR is the only truly great band, punk rock or otherwise, writing songs about work these days. For shame!

"Hard Day's Night" by THE BEATLES! Yes, I love the Beatles! A classic "I work hard to buy you stuff" song. Who hasn't worked just to buy something—records, food, drugs? Consumerism! Punk rock!

"Career Opportunities" by THE CLASH! "Do you wanna make tea at the BBC?" No!

"How I Made a Million in a Punk Rock Band" by THE MR. T EXPERIENCE! Here's a Jon Von blast from the past! I had to exercise restraint, because, if I opened up the floodgates to songs about being in a band (under the principle that being in a band is "work"), then I'd have ten tapes full of songs about the trials and tribulations of today's punk rocker. Since I'm assuming that most punks have jobs outside of rock and roll, I'm not letting them off the hook with some bullshit rock and roll anthems! Still, this song is ridiculous.

"Born in the U.S.A." by BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN—If you don't like this song, then you are an idiot! And, if you think its some dumb patriotic song, then, you sir or ma'am, are incapable of understanding lyrics. I used to resist The Boss, but in the past few years, I've become a believer. One of the best songs about the American industrial decline.

"Ludlow Massacre" by WOODY GUTHRIE—One of the saddest songs I know. Who's singing about work-related killings today? Can you imagine hearing a punk song about the deaths of thousands of people in India from the Bhopal disaster there?

"Got a Backbeat" by AMERICAN STEEL—Classic opening line: "My lady left me, my boss gives me no break." Kind of an "everything-in-my-life-is-going-to-hell" song. I'm only letting one of these on the tape—and this is a great one!

"53rd and 3rd" by THE RAMONES—A song about working as a male prostitute! A great, specific song! And it contains one of the most ridiculous lines in the history of music: "Then I took out my razorblade and I did what god forbad!" Dee Dee! Punk rock!

"Quit Your Job" by CHIXDIGGIT—One of the best songs under 30 seconds! I put it on this tape two times in a row! After all, quitting is a key part of any job!

"History of the Concept of the Soul" by THE MR. T EXPERIENCE—I know, I know, TWO MTX songs? But this is the most specific song about being a student I've ever heard. How specific? It's just the first paragraph of a paper about ancient philosophy. And Dr. Frank even sings the footnotes! And, although it's not at all like working a job, for grad students, it is one, complete with fellowships and grants. (For the last two years of my life, I got paid to study French labor history. Ridiculous but true!)

"There is Power in a Union" by Billy Bragg—So many Billy Bragg songs to choose from, and I pick one that he didn't even write. This song is just so simple and powerful, especially this version.

"Coal Miner's Blues" by HAZEL DICKENS AND ALICE GERRARD—I had to represent the traditional mining songs somehow, and this is an old classic. Plus, I love HAZEL DICKENS and, perhaps the only thing as miserable as being a coal miner was being a coal miner's wife, so I like hearing this sung by women.

"Lightning Bolt" by GHOST MICE—I'm not that into this band overall, but this song is amazing. I'm assuming it's about the singer's dad—who worked in a cemetery for more than 30 years, and then got a pay cut 'cause of the financial problems caused by the Catholic Church's sex scandals. "I can't believe you have the nerve to say that now you're gonna have to cut his pay 'cause one of your priests did such an awful thing."

Side B!

"Folk Song" by DILLINGER FOUR—Yep, *two* D4 songs! Would a Christian complain about hearing *two* verses from The Bible? Would a Communist complain about having to read Marx *and* Engels? One of the best general songs about work (and more)! "So many people with so much so show/rotting away in their own little holes/One can only wonder why."

"The Invisible Man" by THE VINDICTIVES—Great song about having a crappy office job and losing all sense of self. "I'm safe in here, becoming part of everyone!"

"Work for Food" by PINHEAD GUNPOWDER—A great song about panhandling, trying to work for whatever you can get. "My sign says I will work for food. My eyes say I'm in a working kind of mood."

"ClockWise" by THE STRIKE—One of my favorite songs by one of my favorite bands—about growing up working class and remembering how hard your parents worked. "A snapshot of a moment frozen in another time/Shows a man who worked his whole life for my family/Overalls, and rolled up sleeves, hands with road map lines/Dusty hard hat reveals his harsh reality/And your life was hard/Hard as the winter winds/Like an old boxcar/Seasoned and thick-skinned."

"Goddamn Job" by THE REPLACEMENTS—Simple and perfect! "I need a goddamn job! Goddammit! Goddammit! Goddamn!"

"This Ain't No Picnic"—THE MINUTEMEN—Pretty basic, working 9 to 5 song, but, hey, it's THE MINUTEMEN, so it goes on the tape.

"Take This Job and Shove It" by THE DEAD KENNEDYS—"Take this job and shove it I ain't workin' here no more!" Yes!

"I Don't Wanna Work" by THE QUEERS—I love this song! The best song to listen to on the way to a shitty job!

"Born to Do Dishes" by THE QUEERS—Two QUEERS' songs in a row! These guys have both bases covered—the work anthem, and then this, the really specific work song. This one, of course, is about being a dishwasher and being proud of it. When I worked in a dish room, this song was played at least once a shift! "I'm soaking wet/I'll never settle down!"

"Can't Farm in the Rain" by ASTRID OTO—The only punk song about farming that I'm aware of. And, better yet, its got specific lyrics: "Phytophera, late blight/Early and powdery mildew/Looks like we're sinking into the ground/And the basket weeder is clogged too." The only punk song to use the word "phytophera!" Five bonus points!

"What We Worked For" by AGAINST ME—I wish this band would have more songs about work, but at least this one's great. "To my friends and enemies who could have been anything/Titans and heroes who found survival in cause and effect/Behind counters Behind windows/Striving just to be people/With bitter ideals of justice/ Do we only need to keep working because it pays rent?"

"Mansion on the Hill" by BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN—"Nebraska" is one of my favorite albums of all time, and this song's a great one from it—about growing up in a steel town and spending a lot of time looking at the rich people's houses. This song reminds me of when I was little and my used to go on car rides after dinner to the rich part of town just to see all the houses and taught about which one we'd want if we won the lottery. A kid's perspective on work.

"Confessions of a Futon Revolutionist" by THE WEAKERTHANS—Another band that should sing about work more. This song's a lot of people's favorite: "Held like water in your shaking hands are all the small defeats the day demands. 10 to 6 or 9 to 5 trying, dying to survive. Never knowing what survival means."

So there you have it! Sixty minutes of songs about work! I'm sure there's lots of punk stuff I forgot about or haven't heard, so if you have any suggestions, I'd be glad to hear 'em. And, if you want a copy of this tape, send $3 my way!

Go forth and work!

—Maddy

PO Box 100882, Milwaukee WI 53210

Without having those finite lines of "in session" or "out of session" drawn by the universities and high schools, the month of June can sneak up on you. For those less unfortunate "career people" such as myself, we look to the Out-of-town Band Barometer to signal that once again: Summer is upon us. Damn, I feel like I have already seen an entire summer's worth of great bands, and fall is still two months away. Here's are the highlights so far:

First and foremost, let's talk about LOOK BACK AND LAUGH. I have touched on them in previous columns, but I finally got to see them at the PAINTBOX show on June 4th at the Gilman. I was floored. I mean I heard this band was good live, but not *this* good. After seeing only one show, LOOK BACK AND LAUGH have already become a household name in my daily conversations with the 'core folk. They've become a "You *have* to see this band" band. I am sure everyone that flew out to see Japan's PAINTBOX got an extra special bonus that night. And for PAINTBOX to follow a band like that? They didn't even have a chance.

LOOK BACK AND LAUGH give 110% in their live performance, and the drummer's playing meshes perfectly with the music (especially apparent in their pummeling breakdowns). Stalwart edge-man, Casey, (who wore a sweet VERBAL ASSAULT shirt by the way) definitely brought the rage. I am not sure what I was more intimidated by, the fact that he had "Drug Free" tattooed across his knuckles, or his insane energy on stage. That coupled with Tobia's brutal vocals (which sounded a hell of a lot more pissed than the record), and you get my new favorite Bay Area band. If you wished TALK IS POISON had a more early 80s sound, then you'll love this band. This is fast, political hardcore at its very best. Do not miss this band when they tour with DROP DEAD. You can pick up their 12" from Lengua Armada, at 1010 Riverine Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92701, USA, or contact them via their website: www.lookbackandlaugh.net.

Next up was the AVENGERS show, which also took place at the Gilman a few weeks earlier. Seeing one of my favorite San Francisco punk bands for the first time was definitely a treat, especially since it was only $5 to get in. Hell, I would of paid $10 for the performance they gave. There weren't as many people there as I would of liked to have seen, but they played under the name the scAVENGERS (I hear because of legal issues), so I think a lot people might have skipped out because they didn't know it was Penelope and crew playing AVENGERS songs. Regardless, if you weren't there you really missed out. They played all their hits: "Thin White Line," "Open Your Eyes," "We Are the One," and my personal favorite "Corpus Christi." Whether she was screaming or singing, Penelope Houston was in top form. Of course I may be a little biased. After all, Penelope Houston *was* my first ever punk rock crush. And I still think she looks as beautiful as she did when she was a teenager. Yeah, I said it. She is still very down for the underground, so visit her website for more AVENGERS info at www.penelope.net.

The honorable show mention for this month goes to KILL THE MESSENGER'S performance at the Balazo Art Gallery. Being a fan of OUTSPOKEN, and since I was already at my girlfriend's house near the Mission district, I skated down to 24th street to check these guys out. I was pleasantly surprised by their latter BLACK FLAG era approach. They were extremely tight, and the drummer was a blast to watch. Speaking of BL'AST, this band pulls this style off as good or better than any of their

contemporaries. The best way to describe them would be if the singer from OUTSPOKEN sang on *Power of Expression* LP. Ahhh, a band only California could produce.

Re-issue of the Month

From the same label that just brought us the NAUSEA Anthology, Hellbent Records has just re-issued THE most powerful NYHC EP of all time on CD. Recorded the same year as the MINOR THREAT *Filler* EP, these record pretty much set the precedent for what was to become the classic New York Hardcore sound, look, and attitude. This was the sound that the early youth crew scene was trying imitate, but could never quite duplicate. My only gripe (as well as most people's) with ANTIDOTE, are the less than respectful lyrics to their misguided song about being unemployed called "Foreign Job Lot." Features Arthur Googy of the MISFITS on drums and John Joseph of the CRO MAGS on back ups. This is an official reissue, so the artwork and sound quality are better than the original. It doesn't matter whether you consider yourself a punk, a straight edge kid, a metal head, a skin, or something in between. There's damn good chance that this record influenced a band that you listen to today. Wake up to the real deal and get this. Check out www.hellbentrecords.com for more info.

Zine of the Month

Last month it was *Start Today #4*. This month goes to Mir's *Look Beyond* #3. Let me make a disclaimer before I begin. My band is interviewed in this issue. Consider this review biased if you want, but like I told Mir, if I did a zine again I would make sure it looked like *Look Beyond*. Evocative of the cut and past style of *Schism* and *Boiling Point*, this issue truly incorporates the great aesthetics that I look for in a music-based fanzine. 28 pages of content including interviews with current bands like RIGHTEUOS JAMS, OUR TURN, and LAYIN' IT DOWN. As well as pieces and bios on bands like IN YOUR FACE (NY), and THE FIRST STEP, BREAKTHROUGH, and JUSTICE. Reprinted interviews with Mark Ryan of SUPERTOUCH and HARD STANCE are also found within these pages. There is even a great drawing of a straight edge kid with a zine in his hand who is turning his back on what appears to be a member of the KKK sniffing coke of the ground while further in the background Saddam Hussein rides piggy back on George Bush. It doesn't get better than this folks. Order this pronto before he runs out, because he's not making many: $2 in person or $3 by mail. USA only. But don't fret Europe; he is having 100 specifically made to be purchased overseas. Mir Ali, 3115 Rimrock Dr., Missouri City, TX 77459.

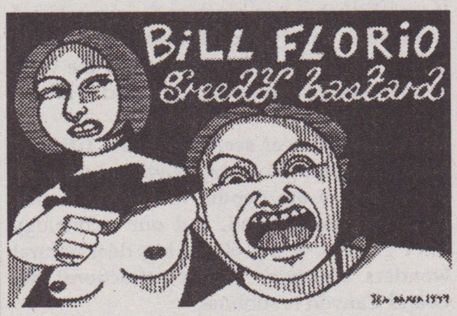
The California Contingent

It's been awhile since I've bragged about the California scene. Well, I know its been at least two columns anyway. Positive Numbers Festival (aka Posi-Fest) will be happening about the same time this issue hits the stands, so its only appropriate to list the California bands that are going to be there this year. Why? Up until 2004, California hasn't had more than 2 or 3 bands on a 30-band line-up. So here is the California Contingent this year: ALLEGIANCE, INTERNAL AFFAIRS, LIGHTS OUT, KNIFE FIGHT, OUR TURN, STAND AND FIGHT, and TERROR. Honorable mentions go to CHAMPION and BLUE MONDAY who are from the West Coast. Seeing this many bands from my home state definitely puts a smile on my face. It's going to be a good weekend for sure. For more info go to www.walkallnight.com/posifest.

Send all rare and colored vinyl to: Carl Cordova, 746 Baker Street, San Francisco, CA 94115.

August Top Ten

LOOK BACK AND LAUGH 12" & live
Look Beyond #3
LIGHTS OUT 7"
AVENGERS live
ENUF demo
BIG DADDY KANE - *It's A Big Daddy Thing*
WASTED YOUTH *Reagan's In (RIP)*
ANTIDOTE re-issue
INSTED Discography (still in rotation)
RIGHT ON demo (also still in rotation)



I think I've had a couple of columns in the past year explaining why punk rock kinda stinks in some ways. I think I mentioned festival tours giving mall punks the wrong idea, pay to play scenes where there's no sense of community. Sure you can come up with a million reasons why kids get all into punk rock when they're 15 and suddenly love Belle and Sebastian when they're 21. By the way I have no idea what Belle and Sebastian is, but I see it in every loser hipster's livejournal.

You can blame lack of deodorant, the strange popularity of THE CASUALTIES, kids who wear non-prescription eyeglasses, tone deaf kids inventing screamo, whatever large record label is currently dominating the scene with its bands that pretend to play fast, lapses in represses of Poison Idea and Dickies CD's... There is one thing that contributes to people getting really bored of punk.

Almost all bands that tour are totally boring.

Lemme map this out for you.

1. The retro band. This is sorta worse than the general copycat band. I mean, you go to any suburban punk show and there's bound to be a band that sounds like CHRIMPSHINE, OPERATION IVY or some other low budget CLASH rip-off band. But to really get popular with people who have no clue is to not only sound like everyone's favorite records, but look like them too. So suddenly you have a band from Pittsburgh, PA who not only sounds like MINOR THREAT, but also got the dirty sneakers and Coca-Cola tattoos to go with it. Kids who listen to the same records every day, find it oh so easy to just pick up the retro bands CD's since they look exactly like the defunct, washed up bands they already like and hey, MINOR PLEDGE suddenly sold 100,000 copies on Go-Kart records. Yeah, yeah, I'm making fun of ANTI-FLAG, but I was trying to come up with a theory and make it stick, without just pointing to one lame, boring, and completely unoriginal band. My friend had an ANTI-FLAG CD playing once and I asked what the hell is this? And they're like ANTI-FLAG! I'm like; "Hey this is 'Sonic Reducer' with the lyrics changed." Her reply, "What's 'Sonic Reducer?'"

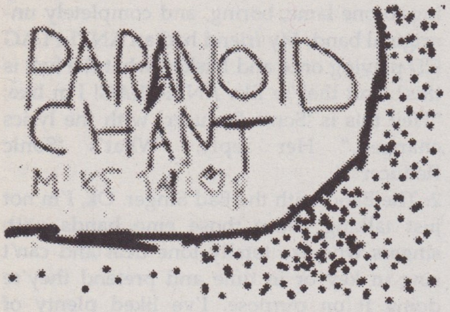
2. The Band with the Bad Singer. Ok, I'm not just talking about those emo bands with singers who are totally tone deaf and can't sing in key or in time and pretend they're doing it on purpose. I've liked plenty of bands where the singer can physically sing and they are great, like THE ANGRY SAMOANS or THE MUMMIES. I'm talking about singers that stand there with a mic stand and a pompadour, singers who insist on holding a guitar because they have no moves anyhow, singers who don't even face the fucking crowd. Hey other than a drummer who can keep it moving the singer is the most important part of the band. There are some singers who don't even say anything in between songs, one of the other members have to talk, what's up with that? Singers who drone on about animal rights and bore everyone to freaking death because all that stuff is in the song, but they cant sing enough for any of it to be heard. Hey jerks! This is supposed to be entertaining, I have a fifteen-minute attention span for good bands, and so does anyone else who has any freaking taste. You have to keep me interested I don't care how "important" you think whatever you're doing is, you have to keep me watching or its all for shit.

3. The Self-Involved band. This can be anywhere from that band that tries too hard to not sound like anything else (just making bad noise) to bands that just smoke too much pot and don't write real songs. Hey this is still music, we all want songs. No one wants ten-minute strings of cool sounding parts. At least no one without a chinstrap and a beret. Write real fucking songs! Between one and two minutes, with some part that someone would want to sing or shout in the shower. No one wants dribble, no one wants wanking. The only people who like this shit are other bad bands that don't listen to any punk rock anyway.

So let's review here. The reason kids get so bored with Punk Rock is that it's boring. How can we expect people who can't even think up a decent band name to come up with a decent song? What sounds cooler? "I saw JOHNNY HOTDOG AND THE CONDIMENTS last night and ripped my pants leg dancing around with a bunch of melted but-

ter on the floor". Or "Yo, ROSESARERED played last night and I smashed my face in when I fell asleep standing up and the sleeping kid on the floor's protractor stabbed me" You're choice. You can either seek out the good bands or go to Warped Tour and buy yer CD's at Best Buy. If you choose the latter you probably will be reading *Spin* in 2 years.

My email is bill@candids.com as always. Buy a SHEMPS CD on Reservation records you'll like it.



June 4th

There was a show in the Smith Hill neighborhood last night. When I walked in I felt like I had stepped back 15 years into some teenagers' busted rec room or a basement in somebody's uncle's house. And the uncle was there, three of them; sunburned 40-something dudes clutching bottles of Amstel lite with shirts open to mid-chest. My initial discomfort made me feel that though it was hard to find, I was in the right place.

Slowly people started trickling in, a little earlier than Providence noise-o'clock, but still beerfully late. No one huge was playing; there was a band from Maine that I don't think was on *tour* tour. I think a lot of people came just to see what the space was like, as this town's kinda' hurting for venues these days. The guy who owned the building was there, running sound, as it were. He's an older guy, friends with the sunburnt longhair uncles. "I just wanna have music here, y'know. I figure, why not?" He seems like an OK guy, and so out of place that it's endearing. He's gesturing around with a beer bottle, telling me what he knows about the old days (without ever egregiously using the phrase), local government, this 16-track tape machine he has tucked away in the corner. "A lot of people fuss about digital, analog, fuck it. I just wanna hear somebody play a song all the way through without fucking up!" Clean, attractive indie rockers began to fill the room, alongside my less clean, more colorful neighbors. Amplifiers began to buzz as cords were plugged in and instruments were tuned.

Outside people were drinking and milling around. Talk of war, boyfriends, school and work. The building was a strange, neutral cinderblock cube. Once a jeweler's building or something, it was situated on a cul-de-sac and surrounded by a thin wooded strip, a great place to get into trouble. On the other side of the street was a huge construction area, cranes akimbo and fences everywhere. I didn't recognize it at first, but I realized I knew the building, I just had never seen it from this angle before. The transportation building is a huge yellow brick warehouse, two stories of 15' each, wall sized windows, expansive bays on all sides. Paul is crazy about this building, forever going on about all the things we could do with it. He's right; it's been in disuse for years and years, and its just shouting possibility. But right now the city is installing sewage line underneath it, rendering it inaccessible for at least the next two years.

From the show, you can jump the fence into the construction yard and approach the obvious focal point of construction: a massive hole surrounded by bulldozers and concrete barricades and work equipment. When I say massive, I mean like 60 feet deep, at least, and probably 20 feet across. It's a gaping, cavernous hole in the earth lined in smooth, poured concrete. Underneath the intense light of the work lamps, the blackness of the hole appeared even more bottomless. Eternal. On the lip of the barrier there was a lug nut. It weighed about as much as four quarters. I dropped it into the darkness; two seconds passed and I heard it ping against the wall, another one-one thousand-one, and it hit the bottom.

If you've ever seen the Grand Canyon, you know that photographs will never do it justice. There are depths which the human eye can't comprehend, and our technology can't express. Some of the big deal natural wonders are cute. Tourist attractions; the Grand Canyon is sublime.

It's this kind of wonder that we sublimate at parties and shows into flirting, talking about bands and maybe politics, getting drunk. Dwelling on your inherent ineptitude when dealing with the enormous scope of the natural world is more than humbling, it's stultifying. More than ever, in wartime we inhabit the animal world that is all too often denied to be our domain. But here it is, in the papers every day, on our friends' tongues, in our kisses and every bite of food. The sadness of war is irreproachable and impenetrable, unbelievably dark and seemingly bottomless. Life is like that, often. But not always. We're stuck in a breadth of experience akin to the unimaginable depth of the crevasses cleaving east from west. We're in a life of leaders and liars, and *goddamn* if my disbelief in the concept of evil isn't being tried. So maybe partying will help, right? Maybe a night out on the sidewalk talking shit with chillers and punx *will* help. It'll keep us sane when we need all the sane people we can get.

So the talk is talked, songs are played, and we wobble home on our bikes. In the night, we dream, maybe remember the next morning, and go back about our labors. This is the luxury of not being in prison, not being in Iraq, not being any one of the hundreds of boots to the neck available to some of us more than others, the luxury of living relatively free in the end times, in the belly of the ugliest beast imaginable. I hope you're all conflicted and hopeful.

Mike. PO Box 28226, Providence, RI 02908

I rarely go to movies because I feel they insult my intelligence. Hollywood's forgotten how to make good movies. When I do go, it usually has to be an independent or foreign film- but it's gotten to the point where even these are stupid and offensive. The most offensive film I ever saw was a Korean movie Mykel Board wanted to see. In it, a man rapes and murders his wife, then goes to a lake where prostitutes service fisherman. The lake/brothel is run by a woman who also kills male and female victims for no good reason. The film was filled with scenes of animal slaughter. Live frogs were hacked to pieces, a pet bird was drowned in its' cage, a friendly dog was beaten up and left to die on a floating platform in the center of the lake, and countless fish were killed and mutilated on camera. The most disgusting scene was when one fish had all its' outer flesh cut off with a knife and eaten. It was then put back into the lake *alive*, and we had to watch the poor creature swim away. (A nauseating sight.) Incidentally, there were no special effects in this movie. *PETA alert!* The atrocities you saw committed against animals were real. This caused Mykel to quip: "There sure weren't any disclaimers about how no animals were hurt or killed during the making of *this* movie." Besides mutilating animals, the main characters mutilated themselves. The man swallowed a line of fishhooks and ripped his throat and tongue out with them. Then the woman inserted the fishhooks into her female genital organ and ripped *that* out. (At least *these* scenes were staged.) I don't know why I stayed to watch the conclusion of this brutality parade except I was waiting for some epiphany at the end, some explanation for why all this carnage was happening. There was none.

I didn't go to any movies for a long time afterwards, but recently I actually saw a major motion picture. By the time you read this (in August) *Troy* starring Brad Pitt will have run its' course. Perhaps it'll even be on DVD*Troy* marks the first time I've gone to a film just to see how thoroughly Hollywood can mutilate a classic story... like Korean filmmakers mutilate defenseless animals in a bizarre film enjoyed by Mykel Board.

We know about the Trojan War from many sources like *The Iliad* and *Odyssey* by Homer, *The Aeneid* by Virgil, and the tragic plays of Aeschylus and Euripides. We also know about ancient Greece through archeology. It's too bad nobody passed the information along to the makers of *this* film. They thrashed

all traditions and precedents. Historical inaccuracies can be seen two seconds in when Greeks are shown riding around on horseback. (Ancient Greeks only used horses to pull chariots.) Worse still was the disregard for established characters well known to anyone who knew the epic.

In this film, king Menelaus' wife, the beautiful Helen is taken by Paris, the Prince of Troy. It prompts a war of nations, and launches a thousand ships. That's where any resemblance to the classic ends. In all other versions of the myth, Menelaus reclaims Helen and Paris is killed. In *this version* the exact opposite happens—Menelaus is killed while Paris survives. Playing with minor details of books for film is one thing—*but to completely change the conclusion of a classic* is something else. If they're gonna do that, they might as well change Romeo and Juliet so they both live and have children at the end! It might make a sweetsy-poo Hollywood ending, but it obliterates story integrity.

The musical score is overpowering. There's a moaning-groaning vocalist who "sang" what I assume the filmmakers think resembled an ancient Greek song of lamentation—except she's ever-present no matter what the scene's about. This intrusive voice reached its crescendo of annoyance when the Greeks finally penetrated the walls of Troy. We could see the Greeks slaughtering Trojans and sacking the city, but all we heard was that wailing woman at ear-splitting volume. My boyfriend Ron said: "If I were sacking Troy, hers is the first throat I'd slit!"

Greek Gods like Apollo and Zeus were never seen even though they traditionally advance the plot. According to promotional materials for the film, they were deliberately removed because including them "wouldn't have been in line with the level of realism that we wanted in the film."

I guess this so-called "realism" also can't include an Achilles (played by Brad Pitt) who had homosexual relationships. Achilles had both male and female loves according to many accounts. *Troy* inflates a captured slave girl as Achilles only true love; but according to the Aeneid his primary female love was Polyxena, the daughter of the King of Troy. She isn't even in the movie and neither are Cassandra, Sarpedon, Iphigenia, Clytemnestra, or other important characters. I guess you can't include everyone in any movie, even if is *three hours* long. But in *no version* of the story was the slave girl ever Achilles true love. She was more like, *property*—a sex toy spoil of war.

Legend has it, Achilles was also sexually attracted to a guy named Troilus, but Achilles killed Troilus when he refused to submit to Achilles' caresses! I guess Achilles (whom we're told was the handsomest of Greeks) wasn't used to rejection. The love of Achilles life was a man named Patroclus. Achilles described his as his "true heart" in the *Iliad*. Patroclus was supposed to be Achilles slightly older lover, but the movie mutated him into Achilles younger cousin and student, instead. Talk about a whitewash—the film purges any trace of the romantic relationship implicit in Homer and explicit in other works, like the Greek tragedy *The Myrmidons* by Aeschylus (525-456 BCE). This play was even more specifically homosexual in nature than the *Iliad*. When Patroclus was slain, Achilles threw himself on the body and cried; "How could you leave me? Why so uncaring after all of our kisses? Why so ungrateful for the holy union of our thighs?" Aeschylus's trilogy of plays about the Trojan war were once thought to have been forever lost when the Library of Alexandria was burned by Omar in 48 BC. Luckily, ten years ago an archaeologist recovered papyrus texts of the play in Egypt, which were found stuffed in a mummy. The first production of the Achilles trilogy in over 2,050 years will be performed in the summer of 2004 by the national theatre of Cyprus, and the production will then travel to Greece (according to Reuters.)

Even without Aeschylus, other sources confirm Achilles bisexual nature. How would Achilles bisexuality have improved the movie? It's a question of continuity. I was talking to a straight friend of mine from work named Thomas, and not knowing the real deal about Achilles and Patroclus, he had difficulty understanding their relationship.

In the movie, Patroclus (depicted as younger cousin and student to Achilles) was warned repeatedly *not* to go into battle. Patroclus then sneakily *stole* Achilles armor and went into battle anyway. He got himself killed by the Trojan prince, Hector, by accident. Hector immediately felt terrible about it. All fighting on the battlefield stopped, (how "realistic") and everyone understood and accepted a tragic mistake was made. But when Achilles found out, he went crazy, killed Hector and desecrated his corpse by dragging it around the walls of Troy without any respect for the code of honor towards a dead warrior.

My friend Thomas didn't understand why Achilles would do that. Achilles was a disciplined warrior himself, trained in combat and hardened by the realities of death. Achilles was aware the kid knew and understood the risks. The kid disobeyed Achilles orders and got himself slain anyhow. Achilles would've thought Patroclus' death was his own fault. No matter how brotherly or protective he felt for his young student, the self-destructive actions of an impetuous youth wouldn't have erased Achilles' honor as a warrior, or prompt him to desecrate Hector's corpse with disrespect. Hector, though an enemy Trojan, was a warrior he respected (as shown in a scene at Apollo's temple.)

But if Patroclus *weren't* depicted as Achilles' foolish younger cousin, but accurately shown as Achilles' devoted older lover, an man who meant so much that when Patroclus asked for permission to wear Achilles armor, Achilles freely gave it because he could deny Patroclus nothing (as in the *Iliad*) and *if* we saw Achilles pray to Zeus to protect Patroclus in battle, expecting his prayer to be granted (also from *Iliad*) and *if* we heard Achilles say: "Patroclus has fallen—he whom I valued more than all others, and loved as dearly as my own life. I have lost him. He whom I can never forget so long as I am alive. Though men forget their dead when once they are within the house of Hades, yet not even there will I forget the comrade whom I have lost" (admittedly Brad Pitt would've sounded silly, but you get the gist,)... well only *then* would Achilles *shock, rage*, and *hatred* for Hector make complete sense. *that* kind of devastating loss would explain Achilles insane, monstrous desecration of Hector's corpse. Without it the behavior seemed a puzzling over-reaction towards the death of a stupid, thieving, stubborn, inexperienced kid who flagrantly disobeyed orders. It made no sense.

And when I explained it like *that* to Thomas...he said to me "Ah! *Now* it makes sense."

Theomnestrus said: "It was lust that mediated their friendship. Achilles, moaning upon the death of Patroclus, lets his unchecked passion burst out with the power of truth when he says 'My tears mourn the holy union of our thighs.'" But Theomnestrus got it only half right. It was deeper than *just lust.* (Do I hear a BUZZCOCKS song?) In the year 2000 Bryne Fone wrote in *Homophobia: A History*, "Lust was not all that motivated Greek men. If that were the case, then Achilles would not have lamented Patroclus with so much anguish." This is a lesson for modern queer people too. As Larry Kramer wrote: "The only way we'll have real pride is when we demand recognition for a culture that isn't *just* sexual. All through history we've been there; but we have to claim it and identify who was in it, and articulate...our creative contributions to this earth."

From Homer: "Achilles still wept for thinking of his dear comrade, and sleep, before whom all things bow, could take no hold upon him. This way and that did he turn as he yearned after the might and manfulness of Patroclus; he thought of all they had done together, and all they had gone through both on the field of battle and on the waves of the weary sea. As he dwelt on these things he wept bitterly and lay on his side, then on his back, and then face downwards, until at last he rose and went out as one distraught to wander upon the seashore."

When Achilles did sleep the ghost of Patroclus appeared to him to tell him when he dies he should put their bones together in a single urn as a couple. Achilles agreed, called Patroclus his true love, and tried to embrace the ghost. But it vanished and Achilles awakened in his empty room, leaving him alone in his sorrow.

Fans of Brad Pitt's 100% heterosexual portrayal of Achilles argued that love for Patroclus was not a crucial element of the story. I disagree. I say eliminating it ruins *both* characters. When I posted information about Achilles bisexuality on a message board for the movie *Troy*, people complained to the moderator and had all my posts purged from the board, even though I didn't use profanity at all. Who says we don't have censorship of ideas in this coun-

try?!? I never learned about Achilles bisexuality in school. I had to find it out for myself by reading books. Kids today would rather see this movie than read books. They'll never know *Troy* is a misrepresentation. Unlike the way this film depicts it, the character of Achilles didn't live to see the famous Trojan horse. But he did live long enough to experience devotional love, and he felt it for another guy. Yet even in 2004 we can't have Brad Pitt play a bisexual *hero* in an epic major motion picture, now can we? Nope. Brad can only play bisexual if he's a vampire, as in *Interview With A Vampire*. Bisexual monsters we understand. Bisexual heroes? Well... that just "wouldn't have been in line with the level of realism that we wanted in the film."

A year and a half late and more than 60,000 lives short, supporters of the war in Iraq finally admit that they were wrong.

When I appeared on Bill O'Reilly's show recently, his bellicose bravado was MIA. We argued about Bush and war, but he studiously avoided talking about Iraq. The Fox News demagogue limited his attacks to my opposition to the war against Afghanistan. To his credit O'Reilly, formerly a ferocious advocate of the Iraqi invasion, was one of the first media war promoters to concede that Iraq had never been a threat to the United States. "I was wrong," he told ABC in February. "I think every American should be very concerned" that weapons of mass destruction have not been found.

Over at *The New York Times*, two pro-war columnists who repeatedly parroted the Bush party line—arguing that Gulf War II was a noble experiment in Middle Eastern democracy, accusing opponents of appeasing Saddam and repeatedly ridiculing skeptics as knee-jerk pacifists who didn't care about the long-suffering Iraqis—have ordered up a heaping plate of crow. "We went into Iraq with what, in retrospect, seems like a childish fantasy," allows Republican war pimp David Brooks. "We were going to topple Saddam, establish democracy and hand the country back to grateful Iraqis. We expected to be universally admired when it was all over. For us to succeed in Iraq," he concludes now, "we have to lose [to the insurgency]."

"I supported the war and now I feel foolish," says CNN's Tucker Carlson.

Thomas Friedman, a 1949-style Cold War liberal who spilled tens of thousands of words pushing a war sold using lies, confesses that he projected good intent on a White House where idealism was in short supply: "I thought the administration would have to do the right things in Iraq—from prewar planning and putting in enough troops to dismissing the secretary of defense for incompetence—because surely this was the most important thing for the president and the country. But I was wrong."

Back in August 2002, *Newsweek* hawk Fareed Zakaria argued: "Done right, an invasion would be the single best path to reform the Arab world. Were Saddam's totalitarian regime to be replaced by a state that respected human rights, enforced the rule of law and created a market economy, it could begin to transform that world." And if done right, tax cuts could have stimulated the economy. But Bush hadn't done anything right when Zakaria wrote that. The Administration's brazenly dishonest and inept post-9/11 record—not the right's fictional knee-jerk "Bush-bashing"—is why half the country never trusted his blandishments about WMDs, the fictional Saddam-Osama link, or nation-building.

Ah, but the new and improved Zakaria finally gets it: "On almost every issue involving postwar Iraq, [Bush's] assumptions and policies have been wrong. This strange combination of arrogance and incompetence has not only destroyed the hopes for a new Iraq. It has had the much broader effect of turning the United States into an international outlaw."

We're supposed to be grateful that Zakaria and his fellow war pimps are—finally!—recognizing reality. At least they're better than Bush, who still thinks torture can convert the Iraqis to democracy: "I won't yield," he said May 13. But these prominent pundits too have blood on their hands.

Had they stood firmly against the war and Bush, on the right side of history, they might have helped slow or even reverse the rush to war during the winter of 2002-3. Their failure to accurately assess the case for war, coupled with their willful blindness to this Administration's neo-fascist tendencies, contributed to needless carnage, attacks on individual rights and the creation of dozens of covert CIA gulags around the world. Every time someone was raped at Abu Ghraib, Bagram Air Base or Gitmo, Tom Friedman and Christopher Hitchens and Bill O'Reilly and David Brooks were de facto accomplices.

The WordPerfect Warriors' journalistic failings are even more pronounced than their moral ones. On an issue with enormous political and historical ramifications for our country, they got the story wrong. They believed in WMDs at a time when the vintage of the government's evidence (none of it was more recent than 1998) ought to have tripped BS detectors. They trusted the White House's promises to rebuild Iraq despite its dismal record in Afghanistan. They never considered that removing a dictator who had killed all of his major opponents might open up a power vacuum. And they never questioned Bush's original sin, his partisan politicization of 9/11.

They should have known better—lots of us did. Or they did know better and lied about it. Whether their integrity or their intelligence was compromised, they should never again be taken seriously.

The pro-war pundits got the biggest story of their careers dead wrong. Now a lot of people are wrongly dead. The fact that this sorry lot still draw paychecks is a tribute to America's infinite capacity for forgiveness, and stupidity.

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NEW BOOK: *Wake Up, You're Liberal!: How We Can Take America Back From The Right* (Soft Skull Press, 336 pp., price $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. It includes advice to the broad spectrum of the American left from anarchists and socialists to mainline Democrats on everything from personal attitudes to TV campaign ads and choosing candidates, as well as proposes a new kind of Democratic Party based on a platform that I believe would be unbeatable. Based on three years of research and a lifetime of thought, this is my political magnum opus. You can order it directly through Soft Skull (softskull.com) or Amazon, or ask your bookstore to order it. If you want an autographed copy send $19 (includes Priority Mail within the United States) to Ted Rall, PO Box 1134, New York NY 10027 and be sure to say how you want me to sign it.

Fuck Cops

So I'm back on the meds. After a couple of years on Celexa, I gave up and stopped taking it. I was off meds for about six months. After that shit, I did a brief stint on the generic Prozac stuff called Fluoxetine. But now I'm on Zoloft. I take 200mg once a day in the morning. Dudes who have been reading this shit lately may have noticed some serious bumming out coming from my direction. The idea behind going back on the meds is heading that shit off before I wind up totally fucked or dead.

I am feeling a bunch better on this stuff. I get the impression that 200mg is a fuck load of this stuff, though. When I fill my prescription for the month they have to give me 60 100mg pills. I guess they don't make a 200mg. I don't have health insurance, so for the first full month on the full dose I had to plunk down 270 bones. I'll be set up on the health insurance before next month's pills roll around.

Anyway, yeah, so I've been feeling better. I've been getting up earlier, and usually with a pretty good outlook. As a result I've been going to bed earlier, and been on a pretty normal routine. I think the drug's improvement on my outlooks has sort of

opened up a few improvements elsewhere too. First I'm eating better. I'm not shoveling crap into my self all day long. Also, I'm not really drinking booze as much as I was.

The meds are weird that way. They sort of reverse the inertia of illness. Like, when I'm fucked, I can't get out of bed. That makes me feel guilty and shitty all day. Then I can't sleep at night, which opens up the door for relentless worry and mental pacing. The cycle fosters drinking booze and feeling bad. It's not difficult to wind up pretty fucking fucked when you're on that path. But on this Zoloft, it seems to have turned the tide a bit. So, I'm pretty pumped.

Another thing I'm doing for myself, along with the pills and trying to eat a little bit better, is going to the shrink. I've been to more than a handful of shrinks. I'm a dude with pretty severe anxiety and depression shit. The anxiety has fucked me all up into a pretty tangled case of the dreaded agoraphobia. I don't fucking go places, for fear of reality-ending panic attacks. Most people with that kind anxiety get pretty fucking depressed. How could you not? Dudes with agoraphobia can't do shit, and that's depressing.

So all the shrinks I've gone to, in one way or the other, try to treat the anxiety. It's pretty sound logic. Being agoraphobic is making me depressed. Treat the anxiety to shake loose the agoraphobia, and then the depression will fall away. I'm sure it's true too, at least to a certain point.

What that model doesn't take into account though is the staggering ability of depression to prevent a dude from taking positive steps towards not being fucked. It's the fucking inertia thing. It's hella hard to get better from agoraphobia when you're so depressed. Plus, the more I've thought about lately, I think my deal with depression and self loathing have roots of their own, independent from agoraphobia and crap.

So jeez, what's the point of this? Yeah, the shrink I'm at now is doing straight up psychotherapy. I'm talking about my feelings, my past, and whatever the fuck. All with a focus on illuminating and coming to conclusions about why the fuck I hate myself. That and the medication seem to be working a bit. I've had some modest success in not directing an inner dialog of defeatist hate at myself. So it's cool. Like the sample on the DR. DOOOM record says, "I'm feeling up, I'm feeling really really up!"

I'm Bruce Banner, Let Me Out Of This Papoose

Yeah, dudes, I was in the hospital, Not the imaginary hospital where Bill Florio and me were, but a real one. I had an allergic reaction to Prozac. It was crazy. It started with an itchy scalp, and within twelve hours my body, including parts very close to my dick, were covered in itchy expanses of raised red welts. Next stop, Mather Hospital!

I've spent the last twenty years being pretty fucking scared of medicine. It took me years of coaxing to get me on anti-depressants. And when I was younger, I was extremely suspicious of any medication I had to take. I don't like the idea of losing control once you swallow it. Like, you have no idea how your body will react. What if I go fucking nuts and die? You know? I'd have intense worry about side effects and allergic reactions. I guess it's a phobia.

Even when I started on Celexa, the only reason was I figured I was as good as dead anyway, so what's the worst that could happen. Even then I'd started on microscopic doses, and slowly worked up to a therapeutic amount.

I was in a similar mind set when I started on the Prozac. I was scared that I'd keep spiraling down and wind up an alcoholic or worse. But this time I felt bravery in the desperation. I went to the shrink and asked to get back on meds. She picked Prozac, and assumed I'd be starting on a modest dose. I told her fuck that, and she put me on a normal-guy dosage.

The next week, she bumped me again, to twice what I had started at. I was a fucking trooper! I was feeling good too, not that bummed.

Of course, the story skips forward to me in the car on the way to the hospital covered in gross, raw, allergic, itchy skin. But it was cool; comforting almost. It was a relief that it finally happened. It was my worst fear, taking a medication, losing control of my body and having to go to the hospital. And now that it was happening, I was just glad I didn't have to worry about it anymore. Because, really, it wasn't that bad. I pretty much knew it was the Prozac, and I'm sure the dudes at the hospital would know what to do.

So I walked in, I was kind of twitching a little from fending off the urge to scratch at myself. I felt sort of ashamed, like I didn't meet the threshold of tragedy for the emergency room. Of course, when the nurse pulled up my shirt and said, "Holy shit," I felt better.

Anyway, it's kind of an anti-climactic story. They gave me some shots of stuff, and some pills of other stuff to take. None of it really fazed me. I felt like I was somehow broken of my phobia. I lived out the fear, so there was nothing left of which to be afraid. It was rad. After about seven hours, the swelling and itching had gone down enough for them to release me, and for the next week I was on a regiment of steroids and Zyrtec, all of which I took happily and with out worry.

Once the Prozac and other shit were totally out of my system I started back on another anti-depressant. This time it was Zoloft. There was a chance the same shit would happen, but I didn't really give a fuck and I wasn't scared. It was a nice feeling, not being scared.

Attention: Dudes Who Need Medicine

I thought a lot about whether or not to write that shit about the Prozac allergy. I think if I had read that shit while I was deciding whether or not to take Celexa the first time, I would have really taken it to heart and used it as an excuse to delay getting on medication. I hope people don't do that. In fact, I'm asking you to please not do that. If you take anything from that story, please take that even when the stuff fucks up, it's usually not that bad. Fuck, I feel weird and preachy. Fuck this! Up tha punx!

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My Name Is Lubrano is officially out of print. Thanks to everyone who ordered one. I'm hoping to get more in print soon.

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I'm really crumby at responding to regular mail, so the quickest response is usually by e-mail at manowells@hotmail.com. Oi!

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END NOTES:
1. I met a girl.
2. I've been listening to these really militant straight-edge Christian gospel singers from the 1950s. They are called the LOUVIN BROTHERS and they are fucking awesome. I'd recommend the album called *Satan Is Real*.
3. GORILLA BISCUITS and MINUTEMEN are awesome. Amsterdam's THE EX fucking suck. Andre can suck a dick.
4. "I'm Andre, that's fucked up, I don't want my name in the column. THE EX is awesome. I'm Andre. Whaah!"
5. Andre's response. "I'm Wells. I listen to Christian country music. Whaah!"

"You wanna come to my pool party?" asks this strange looking punk rock creature with rings and studs covering the majority of her face.

"Isn't it kind of hot for that?" I ask her, as I stand in the back room of The Emerold Lounge here in Phoenix, Arizona, sipping a Bud, while trying to keep the two shots of Jose Cuervo in my stomach, stopping it from crawling up the back of my throat.

"In August it's too hot...but the water is still cold," she and her face full of metal tell me.

I quickly walk to the bar and ask my pals Brian and Don if it's still cool enough to swim in this desert heat. They tell me it is, and that I'm a pussy.

I tell them I already knew that part.

So I tell Ms. Magnito I'd love to come to her party, and that I hope it's as good as the ones my pals used to have in the New York City area.

"You guys had pool parties?" she asks, eyes widening, metal rings bending.

"Not only did we have pool parties, we had the mother of all pool parties," I say.

"Go on," she says, actually caring about what I have to say. So I do.

*

So there I was, and as I exit my building in Tribeca, I see Evan, my bass player, and chauffeur of Furious George, standing in front of his black 1987 Thunderbird, in his cut-off denim shorts, ugly Hawaiian shirt his grandmother got for him, sneakers, with no socks, a big punk rock no-no, sunglasses, and straw hat. He looks like the worst kind of tourist.

"Hey George," he says to me as I try to ignore him so that people in my building don't think I actually know him, "you're not dressed for the occasion." I look at my reflection in the driver's window of his '87 Thunderbird. I'm wearing a black t-shirt, black leather vest, black jeans, black socks, and black sneakers. I'm dressed correctly. It's him, who isn't.

"You dressed like Ryan," Evan says to me, then points to the back seat of the car where our pal Ryan is fast asleep, or, most likely, unconscious from the amount of alcohol he drank the night before. Ryan was also wearing all black.

"I dressed right," I tell Evan.

"But it's a pool party," says Evan, with his arms extended into the air. Evan likes to do that a lot. Put his arms in the air to make a point.

"But it's a "Punk Rock Pool Party" I explain to Evan.

"Well, George," he says to me, not looking me in the eyes from behind his real Ray-bans, "I'm dressed as punk as it gets." I took another look at him, then at Ryan passed out in the back seat, and my reflection. I guess he was right. Pussy.

We make our way into Jersey with Ryan still passed out in the back seat. Every once in a while, I get a good whiff of the booze he must have swam in. We are on our way to Sue Blank's house. Sue, who manages, books, sells merchandise, and who is the mommy of the Blanks 77, Jersey's favorite band. Evan points out various landmarks as he drives, and I nod my head like I care.

"George," he says, "there is the diner where me and Frank and the Devitto brothers went after that night when Frank chased those gay bashers with a chain-saw."

"Uh-huh," I say to Evan, as I fumble around his glove compartment for a tape to listen to, so I don't have to hear Evan's oral history for the zillionth time.

Evan goes on about something or other while I search his tape collection, and finally find an Iron Maiden tape. I pop it in the deck and crank it up. Evan sings along, and Ryan wakes up. I look at him in the rear view mirror, and see his spiky hair all over the place.

"Yuck, metal," says Ryan, and I smell his breath and get a little buzz. And with that, he lies back down and passes out again.

We reach the exit where Sue lives, turn off the highway, and make our way through a bunch of little side streets looking for her house. We have to follow a bunch of detour signs, and wind up getting lost. We ask some guy who is mowing his lawn where the street Sue lives on is, but he can't hear us, his Sears Lawn Mower is louder than a Hell's Angel's Harley. We finally ask these two guys in their golf clothes loading up their trunk where the street is, and they tell us.

We pull into Sue's driveway and park behind a bunch of nice cars with punk rock stickers all over them. As we open the car doors, Ryan wakes up and asks if we are there yet. We tell him we are, and he tells us that that is a good thing, and that he needs a beer. It's been at least two hours since he had one. Punk rock.

Once inside Sue's house, we kick back and relax. I grab a beer, as does Ryan, and Evan gets a Pepsi. Pussy. Sue tells us she is happy to see us, asks where our drummer is, tells us she is glad we made it out there, and then gives us all hugs. She is like at the most, five feet tall, has like ten different colors in her hair. And she is very cute. We all kind of blush. Then I tell her, Michael, our drummer, had to work. She says, "Oh.." What ever.

"Some of the kids are here already," Sue explains to us, "and some are on their way." I ask her how many people are coming to the party, and she tells me she has no idea. She tells us that she hopes it is not too many, because then there will be a big mess, and when her parents get home from being out of town, they might flip out. I offer Ryan and Evan's help in cleaning up.

We make our way to the back porch and get a good look at the pool. It is one of those kidney shaped ones, with a diving board and everything. Evan runs down to it and feels the water. He tells me it is warm. I tell him "good." I have no intention of going in the damn thing. Pools are not punk rock. And being undressed certainly isn't punk, either. Fuck that nonsense.

Eventually, lots of people show up to the party, and it really starts to kick in. A bunch of skinheads fire up the grill and start to prepare food. Hot dogs, hamburgers, the works. Some punks sit around on the porch smoking cigarettes and drinking beer, discussing their favorite bands. I get a good look at them, and realize that none of them can be over twenty. It's a good thing no cops are around, or we'd all be in a Jersey jail.

After downing a few beers, Sue gives me a tour of her house. I get to see the laundry room, the living room, where a couple of skinheads are watching television, the kitchen, and her bedroom. Her bedroom is, well, just like her. Small, cute, and cluttered as hell. She has a large collection of Pez dispensers, little knick knack's everywhere, and lots of Jesus stuff. I tell her that I thought she was a Jew, and she says she is. But that she loves the Jesus stuff. Just like she loves the punk rock and the kids. I tell her she goes.

Finally the Blanks 77 arrive to the party, and everyone welcomes them. The party is really sort of for them. They had just returned from a three month tour of the U.S., and this was kinda a celebration of them making it home. Alive. And knowing those guys, that is quite an accomplishment.

Mike Blank sees me, walks up to me, and gives me a hug. I hug him back. It is good to see the guy. His hair is no longer long and spiky, it is shaved short, and dyed with a leopard skin pattern. He looks kinda tired from being on the road. I ask him how he is and he tells me he is the same as when I saw him exactly a week earlier in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Furious George played a show with them out there. He tells me he is glad to be home, and the itching has gone away.

"What itching," I ask him, expecting him to tell me about the itch for punk rock, or sex, or whatever.

"The scabies itch", he replies. Doh.

Mike then goes on to explain that somewhere on their United States tour, The Blanks 77 all got scabies. Mike thinks he may have gotten it first from sleeping on an old couch some guy found near a dumpster, but he's not sure. He says the itching started toward the end of the tour, and everyone in the band got it. Also some friends, who hung out with the band in the van, got them as well. I ask him to explain to me what scabies are, and he tells me they are little "eeny-weenie bugs" that live under your skin, and lay eggs, and make you itch. Eeeew, Yuck.

I ask the rest of the Blanks 77, Tim, Chad, and Renee, about the scabies experience, and they all say it is miserable. Sue, who was in the van with them, says the same thing. They all tell me about some cream they had to smear all over their bodes to kill the damn things, and how gross that was. But they all say they are glad it's over.

Later, outside, Evan decides he is gonna be the first to go in the pool. He takes off his shirt, hat, and sneakers, and goes in the pool. He is quickly joined by our friend, and local scenester celeb, T.C. They swim around, and tell everyone the water is fine. All the punks and skinheads look at the two in the pool and then go about their business. Talking about punk bands, cooking food, and drinking. Evan exits the pool and walks up to me, dripping wet.

"Come in the pool, George," Evan says to me. I just look at him, as do my friends Sam, Mike at 18 (who got his name from Mike Blank, because he looks like him when he was 18), Dean Dean The Sex Machine, Jesse, and the others. Evan is really hairy. Gross hairy. He even has hair on his back. Geez.

I tell Evan that I'm not going in the pool. He asks me why I bought my bathing suit with me then, and I tell him that I took it with me because I thought that maybe, maybe I'd go in. But I now know I won't. He calls me a pussy. So I go in the house and put the damn thing on. Fucking bass players.

I come back outside and Evan is swimming around again, as are a few other kids. Mostly boys, and one girl. Who is seventeen. And who has quite a set of knockers. Wow.

I jump into the pool in my bathing suit, and a Flatus t-shirt I borrowed from Sue. Evan tells me to take off the shirt, but I tell him I won't. I don't want everyone staring at me like they did at Evan. Especially since I had just shaved my chest a few days earlier. I did it cause I wanted to look like Captain Kirk. And body hair is gross. I remember that episode

where Kirk and Spock are like Gladiators, and Kirk wears no shirt, and has no chest hair. Now that, was a real man, I used to say to myself. And that is why I shaved my chest. But now the stubble was itching me. Oh well.

Evan and I swim around for a while, and Mike at 18 decides to join us. In his clothes. T-shirt, jeans, sneakers, wallet, and everything. He just jumps right in with a beer in his hand and starts to swim around. He yells to the others to come in, and some do, in their clothes.

So a bunch of punk rockers are swimming around this kidney shaped pool, all dressed in their black clothes, and I feel kinda stupid. I mean, there I was, in a fucking bathing suit. I felt like a dork.

"Hey George," says Mike at 18, "I think some of the other guys wanna go in." I look at Sam, Dean, Jesse, and the others, and they don't seem like they want to go in to me.

"They don't wanna come in, Jay," I say to Mike at 18. Jay is his real name.

"Yes they do, they just need our help," explained Mike at 18. I looked at him, and finally saw what he was getting at. We went and got Evan, and a couple of others in the pool. We then got out, ran up, grabbed Jesse, and just gave him just enough time to take off his watch, and take out his beeper before he was thrown into the pool. Then he helped us get Sam, and then so on and so on. Soon there were like fifteen kids in the pool, all dressed entirely in their clothes.

Mike Blank comes out of the house and sees everyone in the pool. I wave to Mike, and he says, "George, you go!", then goes to the cooler to get a beer. Before he knew what happened to him, he had joined us in the pool, with an un-opened beer in his hand. I asked Mike if he liked the water as he stood there in the low end, with his clothes entirely soaked, and water dripping from his head to his bullet belt. He told me it was nice.

Eventually, more people either came into the pool, or were thrown in. Soon, almost everyone was in there, including Sue, in all her clothes. I think I saw trails of color behind her head as she moved about in the water. The only people who were not in the pool were a bunch of skinheads who were sitting at a picnic table. We were afraid of them. We had chicken fights, drank beer in the pool, and even had diving contests. At one point, as Sue was telling me a story about how Mike Blank likes to pee in pools, I looked over and saw Mike standing in the pool, near the steps, with a silly grin on his face. I pointed him out to Sue.

"Not in my pool, Mike" yelled Sue. But it was obviously too late. Then Mike swam over to two girls, and sat there with them, one arm around each girl.

"Are you Furious George?" asks this huge skinhead guy as he swims up to me. He is wearing shorts, no shirt, and red suspenders. I kinda panic, but figure I better tell the truth.

"Yeah," I tell him, "I'm him."

He then gives me a big old bear hug and tells me he loves the band and stuff, and that he is good friends with the Blanks. I try to sigh a breath of relief, but can't, because the guy is hugging me so hard. He finally lets go, and I catch my breath. He tells me his name is Junior, and I tell him I'm pleased to meet him. We talk about bands for a few minutes, then he starts to yell, "No, Pedro, no!" I ask who he is yelling at, and he points to the diving board.

On the diving board is this skinhead guy, Pedro, I guess, a guy with tattoos and everything. And he's taking off his clothes. Junior keeps yelling for Pedro to put his clothes back on, but Pedro ignores him. Soon, Pedro is completely naked, and Evan points out to me that Pedro is definitely not a Jew. Everyone in the pool by now is screaming. Junior tells me that Pedro is a gay skinhead, and there is nothing wrong with that, but Pedro should put his clothes back on. Pedro then jumps into the pool, and swims toward Junior and I. Junior screams and yells for Pedro to get away, but Pedro gives Junior a big hug, naked. We all laugh.

We swim around some more, and eventually Pedro puts some shorts on. Then it's Evan's turn. Not being one to shy away from cheap attention, Evan gets on the diving board and starts to take off his bathing suit. We all yell for Evan to please not do this, but he does anyway. We yell, "Put it on, Put it on", but Evan ignores us, gets naked, and jumps in the pool.

He starts to swim around, and it's like a fucking scene from Jaws. Everyone is screaming, and it's like Evan is the shark. Every time he gets near someone, they scream, and run out of the pool. Finally Evan puts his suit back on, and we all breathe easier.

Now it's Mike at 18's turn. He gets on the board, wanting the attention that Pedro and Evan just got, so he starts to take off his clothes as well. Now Mike at 18 is a cute young boy, and really funny, so we all yell for him to take it off. He gets all mad at us and says, "How come you yell that at me, and to the other guys, you say 'put in on?.'" Poor guy. So confused at just 18.

We continue to drink and swim and soon it starts to get dark. I eventually get out of the pool, as does Evan, and Ryan, who, by the way, also went into the pool entirely dressed. I change into my dry clothes as does Evan. Ryan has to go back to the city with us, soaked. But he doesn't seem to mind. He's entirely drunk.

"Thanks for coming out to the party," Sue says to us and she hugs us all, one at a time. We thank her for the good time.

"You go," says Mike Blank, "back to the city." I tell Mike we will.

As we make our way to the car, we say our good-byes to everyone, including my new skinhead pal, Junior. Sue asks me how much time I spent in the Blanks van, and I ask her why.

"Well, most people who spent time in the loft got the scabies." I tell her I was only in the van for about twenty minutes in Lancaster, that I was up on the loft, reading the funny notes the band wrote on the ceiling, and that I don't think I caught anything.

"Good," she says. I ask about the signs of scabies, and she says itching, red bumps, stuff like that. She tells me that the incubation time is about three weeks, and I quickly do the math. I figure that if I get them, I got at least two weeks before anything happens. But it won't. Not to me.

Evan, Ryan, and I get into the 1987 Black Thunderbird and make our way back to the city. We all talk about what a great time we had, and eventually, Ryan and I fall asleep from exhaustion by the time we get to the tunnel. I think Evan was still talking.

Exactly two weeks to the day, later, the itching started. Doh.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

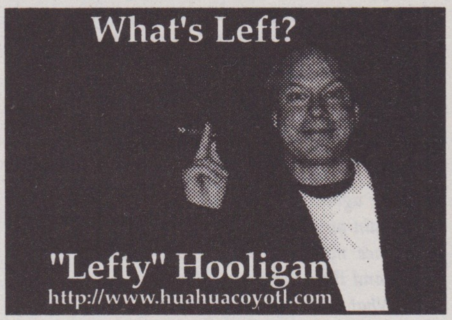
1. Dean Dean The Sex Machine now has his own band with Renee in it! Check out their website and recordings at www.deandeanandthesexmachines.com.

2. Saw The Wrong-Siders again here in Phoenix. Amazing band. So is the band The New Romantics. And I can't forget to mention The Half-Empties.

3. Just got The Steinways new CD on Whoa Oh Records. These guys sound like The Beatles meets Green Day. Pop punk at it's Best! Now, if I could just explain to some of the kids around here who the Beatles were....

4. *Playing Right Field: A Jew Grows In Greenwich* is out now on Soft Skull Books. I wrote it and you'll like it. Everyone tells me it makes perfect bathroom reading material. I find that kinda funny since there are no glossy pictures of naked women.

5. www.georgetabb.com



The radio this morning said the Allied invasion of Laos had bogged down. Without thinking, I nodded and said, "Good."

And having said it, I realized the bitter truth: Now I root against my own country.

This is how far we have come in this hated and endless war. This is the nadir I have reached in this winter of my discontent. This is how close I border on treason:

Now I root against my own country.

How frighteningly sad this is. My generation was raised to love our country and we loved it unthinkingly. We licked Hitler and Tojo and Mussolini. Those were our shining hours. Those were our days of faith.

They were evil; we were good. They told lies; we spoke the truth. Our cause was just, our purposes noble, and in victory we were magnanimous. What a wonderful country we are! I loved it so.

But now, having descended down the torturous, brutalizing years of this bloody war, I have

come to the dank and lightless bottom of the well: I have come to root against the country that once I blindly loved.

I can rationalize it. I can say that if the invasion of Laos succeeds, the chimera of victory will dance once again before our eyes — leading us once again into more years of mindless slaughter. Thus, I can say, I hope the invasion fails.

But it is more than that. It is that I have come to hate my country's role in Vietnam.

I hate the massacres, the body counts, the free fire zones, the napalming of civilians, the poisoning of rice crops. I hate being part of My Lai. I hate the fact that we have now dropped more explosives on these scrawny Asian peasants than we did on all our enemies in World War II.

And I hate my leaders, who, over the years, have conscripted our young men and sent them there to kill or be killed in a senseless cause simply because they can find no honorable way out — no honorable way out for them.

I don't root for the enemy. I doubt they are any better than we. I don't give a damn anymore who wins the day. But because I hate what my country is doing in Vietnam, I emotionally and often irrationally hope that it fails.

It is a terrible thing to root against your own country. If I were alone, it wouldn't matter. But I don't think I am alone. I think many Americans must feel these same sickening emotions I feel. I think they share my guilt. I think they share my rage.

If this is true, we must end this war now — in defeat, if necessary. We must end it because all of Southeast Asia is not worth the hatred, shame, guilt and rage that is tearing Americans apart. We must end it not for those among our young who have come to hate America, but for those who somehow manage to love it still.

I doubt that I can ever again love my country in that unthinking way that I did when I was young. Perhaps this is a good thing.

But I would hope the day will come when I can once again believe what my country says and once again approve of what it does. I want to have faith once more in the justness of my country's causes and the nobleness of its ideals.

What I want so very much is to be able once again to root for my own, my native land.

Arthur Hoppe,
"To Root Against Your Country,"
San Francisco Chronicle, March 5, 1971.

The United States has lost the war in Iraq. It may take many more years and lives before we witness desperate Iraqi collaborators being flown out via helicopter from the rooftop of the fortress American embassy in Baghdad, but the war has already been lost. Anybody with half a brain realizes this, which is why Junior Bush is still claiming there's a light at the end of the tunnel. I'm a bit surprised that Kerry hasn't proven much smarter.

Do I think America's defeat in Iraq is a good thing? If it puts the lie to neoconservative notions of unipolar empire, Pax Americana and a benevolent global hegemony, then yes I do. It won't put an end to American imperialism mind you. Kerry, the Democratic Party, and a majority of the American people all think that toppling governments we don't like around the world is right and justified. But it will take down the rabid neo-con wing of America's imperial administration now in power, which is a tiny improvement.

That most of the neo-cons are chickenhawks has been well documented, and well publicized of late. Much like punk's own chickenhawk Larry Livermore, these folks managed to avoid military service themselves in wars like Vietnam, yet today vehemently endorse sending a younger generation off to fight and die for the empire. The caveat with Larry is that he fits more than one of the word's definitions. The lack of military experience no doubt contributed to the neoconservative delusion that America could and should become a benign, modern democratic version of the Roman Empire, a delusion that is collapsing so quickly and so ingloriously in Iraq. For to quote that paleo-conservative Patrick Buchanan: "In any guerrilla war we fight, there is going to be a steady stream of U.S. dead and wounded. There is going to be collateral damage – i.e., women and children slain and maimed. There will be prisoners abused. And inevitably, there will be outrages by U.S. troops enraged at the killing of comrades and the jeering of hostile populations. If you would have an empire, this goes with the territory. And if you are unprepared to pay the price, give it up."

Neo-cons like Lehrman and Kristol continue to rant, demanding that the US crush the Iraqi insurgents with overwhelming military power, insisting that "[t]he immediate task is therefore the destruction of the armies and militias of the insurgency — not taking and holding territory, not winning the hearts and minds of Iraqis, not conciliating opponents and critics, not gaining the approval of other nations. All of these can follow after victory over the violent insurrection." Yet everything from Fallujah through Moqtada al-Sadr to Abu Ghraib shows in Buchanan's words that "we are not up to it." It's particularly satisfying to witness the defeat of the neo-con agenda, not least because I expected and wrote about the inevitability of an Iraqi quagmire from the start. The travesty here is that this imperial blunder has come at the cost of so many lives, so many of them so young. And while I'd like nothing better than to ship out dumb-fuck neo-cons like Larry Livermore to the Sadr City frontlines to replace the kids they think nothing of sending to slaughter with their support of the war, I'd settle for war crimes trials for Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, et al.

Fat chance of that. A resounding rout in Iraq may not even have much affect on the delusional neoconservative mindset. After all, the neo-con fantasy line on the Vietnam War is that it was a hard-fought American *victory*.

So I too root against my own country. As this column goes to press, the US government is scrambling to hand over a faux sovereignty to a self-selected interim Iraqi government rubberstamped by the UN. I hope it fails, and not just because otherwise the "chimera of victory will dance once again before our eyes–leading us once again into more years of mindless slaughter." I have come to hate my country's rapacious foreign policy and the collusion of state and capital that drives it forward. Unlike dear old Art Hoppe, I never experienced a just American war, only a series of sordid imperialist adventures around the globe. My condemnation is therefore far more blanket.

I'm not going to argue whether or not America ever fought a just war, or was a colonialist-imperialist venture from the git-go. I have too much exposure to revisionist history ever intellectually to seek some mythic just and noble America. Yet emotionally I can draw upon rose-tinted Kennedy-era childhood memories, a comforting sense of place, an enjoyment of American culture, humor, food, etc., even the unexpected epiphany that I'm an American to appreciate the desire to have some pride in the place where one lives. Yes, I know this runs counter to the sentiment expressed by Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* that "workers have no country." Heck, I'd settle for not having to apologize for my passport whenever I go abroad.

Why is it that the rare times I do venture outside the borders of this country for some international tourism, the US of A is particularly reviled? I traveled around Europe during the Vietnam War, and stayed two weeks in Paris last year. It would have been nice to comfortably correct the folks I met on my limited travels who first assumed I was Canadian or Dutch, instead of always contritely saying: "I'm an American but I don't agree with what the government is doing around the world."

In closing I quoted the Art Hoppe column above in total as much for inspiration as for what he had to say. I usually write columns that are three, four times as long, yet say a tenth of what Art managed to convey, seemingly so effortlessly. He was brilliant.

WEBPAGE UPDATE... I've decided to let my web page lapse. I never considered my words and the ideas they tried to express so vital as to require a 24/7 presence on the worldwide web. I'm secure enough in my ego to be quite happy with an audience limited to the readership of this magazine. There are much more efficient ways to broadcast my opinions across the web, from posting on indymedia to using various progressive forums to reprint my prose. Besides, it's a fuck of a lot of work regularly maintaining and updating a website.

The main reason I'm letting go of the web presence however is because its *raison d'etre* has all but ceased to exist. I started the web page to host my "lost column" detailing my disenchantment with former employer Ruth Schwartz of Mordam Records. My full-on attack on Ruth's shoddy business practices and her sellout of Mordam's founding ideals was a bit too scathing to be carried in *Maximum Rock'n'roll*, which Mordam distributed at the time. The web page was thus a convenient way to get my criticisms out without endangering the magazine. That was almost five years ago, and since then Mordam has gone from a premier indie distributor of cutting edge punk

rock employing over 20 people to a backwater marginal music jobber with just a handful of employees eager to do deals with major label companies. First Lookout Records jumped ship for Sony's RED, then Ruth moved her operations from San Francisco to Sacramento, and finally Alternative Tentacles lost the Dead Kennedy's back catalog when Jello's former band mates won in court. *Maximum* made the break and left Mordam nearly two years ago, prompting Ruth to scream at the coordinators: "You won't last six months without Mordam!" Well, *Maximum* is still around and going strong, whereas rumor has it that Ruth is looking to sell Mordam Records.

I'm pleased to see Ruth Schwartz's business on the ropes. Rest assured that Ruth has not been hurt financially by Mordam's sorry decline. Thanks to the Dead Kennedy's, Faith No More, Green Day and others, Ruth has become a millionaire several times over living in semi-retirement in Grass Valley off her investments. Nor will punk rock suffer if and when she sells Mordam Records. Mordam stopped being a vital avant-garde force in punk long ago. There's even a remote possibility that new ownership would help to restore Mordam's punk street cred. Mordam's small member labels may have to scramble to find new distribution or go back to DIY arrangements if they don't like the change in ownership, but that can only be good for them in the long run. Ruth gradually dispensed with Mordam's anti-corporate, anti-big label, pro-DIY indie business practices as she tasted success, so there wasn't much left of Mordam on the downhill slide except for an empty shell cloaked in punk mythology. I say, good fucking riddance.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

There is photo of Arwen and me, taken at about six this morning. We are smiling guiltily and we are toasting each other. Now I know I am gonna burn in hell for celebrating someone's death, but the world has been liberated from one of the worst men to dare to wheeze up all the clean air that was left after all of his destruction, and that is something to celebrate, particularly when you are with beautiful punk rockers in a stable, historic leftist squat in Northern Italy. No, I don't have to hear the newscasters get sappy, or see the flags flying at half-mast, or any of the other bullshit. You think anyone in Italy is mourning Ronald Reagan? You think that the Italians give a fuck about him? No, of course they don't, they're just as happy as the punks are, all over the world. Finally, we don't have to think about the fact that he lived longer than the two best Ramones. Now that's the stuff that tragedy is made of.

I got into Milan last night, exhausted, worn thin from drinking with the wild-ass punks all night in La Spezia, a seaside town two hours south of Genoa that fades into the historic Bay of Poets (where Keats, Shelly, and the like once turned for inspiration). They have a great punk club there that was built with the bare hands of the older punks. They spent many of their earlier years fighting skinheads outside the club, like the kids used to have to do in my hometown. There are a lot of skinheads in Italy, who idealize the old days of Mussolini, seriously. The punks who try to keep the club together also deal with a lot of other familiar problems that we have to face here in SF: drunk kids, permits, neighbors, and cops.

Our host and tour guide, Mossimo, was one of these older punks who had worked to sustain the La Spezia scene. He is about my age, late twenties. After several phone calls and intricate plans, he picked us up at the train station at eight at night. We threw our gargantuan bags in the back of his miniscule black Fiat. Arwen and I have had a running joke that my backpack, with its cumbersome and not all that helpful frame, is a small drunk crusty boy that I can't get rid of. His weight fluctuates a little; depending on how many 40s he's downed on a particular day. He whines at inappropriate moments. He always wants another beer when we are late for the train. In short, he is a giant pain in the ass, but, predictably, my cross to bear.

Mossimo is admirably good-natured about the drunk punk in my bag and the way it's stinking up his otherwise immaculate car. Lemme tell you, punks are generally much cleaner in Italy than they are in the States, and it can be a little awkward. Still, he lets me put my bag in his car and we pack everything away. Once our hands are free, we shove him into the "Foto Fun" booth and we make goofy faces at the weird digital camera it houses, getting back a few glamour shots.

We go to a cafe that is in a squat, but not anything like what we Americans understand to be a squat; it is immaculate and permanent, and mostly the difference comes from the lack of tension in the place, you aren't sitting there the whole time, waiting for the cops to bust you. It really allows you to have a different sort of mentality. We drank red wine and ate crazy food, and we took off to the queer art squat to drink coffee. There was nothing up on the walls that night, but plenty of people being cute and having fun. Great coffee, too.

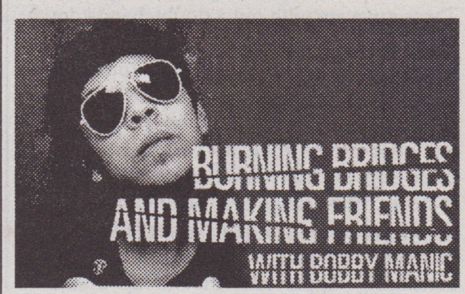
Then we got to the show, and Mossimo had to show us the bartender, his friend, who has full sleeve Ramones tattoos on both arms. You've never seen anything like it, unless you've been to La Spezia. I was drunk and grabbing at the poor guys arms, like he wasn't even human, like he was a photo of himself. But, I'm sorry, the last time I saw someone I didn't know with just one Ramones tattoo, it made me happy for at least an hour. This guy was fucking covered.

We hung out the rest of the night, in various spaces, and then we woke up in the morning and the three of us had a long conversation about how to keep the scene a community in this goddamn digital age. I mean, seriously, remember when the back five pages of *MRR* was personal ads of punks looking for rare Dicks seven inches or friends to talk about music and politics with somewhere near their shit towns? Goddamn tape trades instead of downloaded music?

It wasn't my only conversation of this nature on this trip. My friend, Guilia, who does Porca Madonna distro and Mi Vida Loca records in Rome, who is a sweetie and a badass, talked to me a lot on this trip about her frustration with a community that is increasingly more interested in buying pins than in buying fanzines, even though the zines are cheaper. She works her ass off to get queer and feminist fanzines distributed in Italy, and people just want Pixies pins. Let's have a little bit of heart, people.

Everything these two people spoke of, which was, essentially, sustaining a truly independent and subversive scene with cooperative spaces and independent media, reminds me of what my friends discuss all the time. Living outside of the dominant culture takes more effort. It is easier to buy a pin that makes you look like you know what is going on than it is to read something written by a member of your community that might give you a sense of what they perceive to be going on. But it is more rewarding. And it is what this shit is all about.

Check out Guilia's label and distro at www.vidalocarecords.com I saw a particularly fun band, Motorama, a punk garagey girl duo, and they have a new record. You should check it out, and see them when they get to the States, or where ever you may live.



Florida is my new home. I'm sorry, but I'm not coming back. First off my new radder-than-the-last-one girlfriend resides here, second Miami's drunken kings of rock'n'roll are back together and playing out again. That's right the almighty CRUMBS are up for another round. Raf and the boys released their fourth

studio album on TKO and a collection of early tracks on Recess earlier this year. I hear rumors of Recess even releasing both on vinyl at some point in the (hopefully) near future, so I've put off on picking either up but I'm not sure I can hold out any longer. I'm praying I get the chance to see them while I'm out here in sunny FLA. Believe it or don't folks, but the CRUMBS are one of the few bands I'm absolutely fanatical about yet never seen live. So it brings me more pleasure than a blowjob from a mouth full of marbles to say "THE CRUMBS ARE BACK TOGETHER BITCHES!"

Usually I'm totally against tooting my own horn (yeah right) but it's a thrill to hear a good band doing a song I helped write... and it not sucking half as much as it does when I play it. Last year the RADIO BEATS asked me if I had any ideas for some new songs. Being the nice guy that I am known to be, I rattled off some lyrics and chord progressions from a discarded song from one of my many discarded bands. Next thing I knew Steve and his West Virginia redneck buddies threw it on as a b-side to their "Blow You Up" EP on Big Neck records. For a band that started out as an off key RIVERDALES wannabe (remember the ALL STARS?) they have grown up and become the bastard sons of TEENGENERATE and the DEVIL DOGS (Heck Big Neck is putting out their debut LP and it's set to be recorded by dirty ol' Steve Baise, how's that for authenticity?)

Canada's ambassadors of rock and roll, the SMUGGLERS, are back with a new LP on Screaming Apple. It's been half a decade since they released *Rosie* but the Cannucks haven't missed a beat. 60s garage, 70s power pop and mid 90s pop punk from a bunch of guys who say "aboot" and ware way too busy watching hockey and putting maple syrup on their hands to be bothered with stupid things like touring and making new records every year. *Mutiny in Stereo* picks up right where they left off (which wasn't that bad of a place to be) and this time they promise to actually try and bring their live-set spectacle out on the road.

Kisses come in all shapes and sizes but lemme tell you, there ain't nothing like a "Rock'n'Roll Kiss" and that's just what TEENAGE Confidential got waiting for you. These guys are with out a doubt, hands down; swear on Ronnie Reagan's grave, the best band to ever come out for Japan. Ever. You can take your TEENGENERATE, your FIRESTARTER, your REGISTRATORS and your TWEEZERS and shove them right up your asses because these guys are that friggin' good. Their English is better, their songs are catchier, their hooks are bigger and I hear they are very nice to their moms. Power pop at it's finest. The LP is on Screaming Apple and that alone makes it worth a listen.

Do you guys remember the RONDELLS? Kinda lo-fi garagey indie pop? Well the girl from that band is co-fronting a new band called the FOXX (that's right, with two "x's"). Co-ed vocals kinda reminds me of a glam rock X (maybe that's where that extra "x" comes into play...). The guy's songs have a straight ahead SLADE/SWEET/BAY CITY ROLLERS feel, while the girl's tunes have more of a roots rock/country twang to them. I think they're on of the few new bands worth checking out these days. I recommend you try to see live before they get all big and popular and get singed to some big record label that will make them everyone's darlings. Just so you can say you saw them first.

Every month I mean to mention this but it always slips my mind; the MORTICIA'S LOVERS have a new album out, *Smash the Radio* is their fourth full length and it's just as good, if not better than *Rock'n'Roll Overdose*. Italy is known for spawning cliché and copycat bands but I'd rather listen to a good KIDS copy than a shitty JAWBREAKER clone. Fans of the BRIEFS and KIDNAPPERS probably wanna give this a spin.

Right now I'm thinking town things: one—how does Greg Cartwright do it? *and* two—what made him stop. The REIGNING SOUND's third and final record is out and it's appropriately named *Too Much Guitar*. After two mellower, quasi-acoustic albums the former OBLIVIAN and COMPULSIVE GAMBLER turned up and just belted it out. One part OBLIVIANS, one part REPLACEMENTS and one part long forgotten blues obscurity. Greg just knows how to make good music.

Everyone's breaking up these days. It's the new thing. It's hip, you're band should try it. But sadly my friends and long time favorites, the MALLRATS are subscribing to this trend as well. The guys sent me notice that they have decided to call it quits. While there has been speculation as to why the guys wanted to go their separate ways, I'd like to go on record and voice my suspicions that front man Ted Angel was finding it hard to juggle his own band, MLB 2004 and his MTX duties with the baseball season now in full swing. I haven't been able to get a hold of him for comment because every time I call he's watching an A's game. All kidding aside, I'm bummed the band never got to finish their second album but with Adam playing bass in the BLACK DALIAHS, Jaz still fronting the HELPER MONKEYS and Ted playing guitar in MTX, it's safe to say the guys will continue to keep busy and be productive during this hour of darkness. Sacramento lost a daughter but gained three mildly retarded songs.

Keeping up with new records is hard to do. My lack of motivation and well, money, has kept me out of the stores these last few months (coupled with the fact I'm becoming increasingly more and more disillusioned with music and leaving the house). Still it seems like these days everywhere I look it's a new band that's so hip it hurts and everyone is pissing day glow and polka dots. I liked the trend when it first started but enough is enough. Who isn't trying to be the next BRIEFS or EXPLODING HEARTS these days? Death to false new wave and a plague upon false pop!

Bottom Line:

• By the time this sees print I'll probably be back in the Bay Area. Boo to that.

• I'm hard at work finishing up my contributions to *Tentacles: A Love Story*. It's a "emo zine" that's kinda like my stuff here... only with no music and lot more goth poetry and unicorn drawings. More next month on that.

• Send your bitching to ihatemrr@hotmail.com; send your love and free stuff to 1709 Bay St, Alameda, CA 94501

• This one was for the Gipper.

Mykel Board sez: YOU'RE WRONG!

"None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free." —Goethe

[Note: For the sake of clarity, I have printed Sven Delgadsen's personal story in italics. He said it. I just copied it down.]

It's more exciting than a Dominican cockfight. I'm at the airport, waiting for Sven Delgadsen, from Norway. I met Sven last year on the train to Bulgaria.

FLASHBACK: Sven is 17. Petite as a Thai boy and blonder than a Hollywood floozie. A thin compact body, his face is perfect. You can't look at it without imagining a trail of semen dripping down the corners of his mouth. He wears a KAFKA PROCESS t-shirt.

"Hey," I said, "you know Kafka Process? I played with them at a place called NO DOGS in Oslo."

He looks at me, startled. Then, a smile crosses his face. "Yeah," he says, "my dad was at that show. Are you Mykel Board?"

Ah, punkrock to my ears. Especially from someone who looks like that and doesn't appear to be carrying a weapon.

We talk. Sven tells me he's always wanted to visit the U.S. but he heard there were all kinds of problems if you're younger than 18.

"I'm only 17," he says, "and I sure can't afford a hotel."

"Oh, no problem," I tell him. "You can stay with me. For as long as you like."

We exchange email addresses. Unfortunately, I have to leave the train in Sofia. He's going on to Athens.

I don't expect to hear from him again, but he emails me in January.

"Mykel," he says, "remember me? I've just turned 18 and want to come to the US. I'm going to Boston first. A friend of mine is studying at Boston University. Then, I'll fly to New York for a few days. I have this special unlimited air ticket. Can I stay with you?"

"Of course," I tell him. "I'll meet you at the airport. Just let me know when you arrive."

END OF FLASHBACK

Sven arrives and we drop his baggage off at my apartment. Since the best use of an attractive 18-year-old is to get him stinking drunk, we're off to Bar Nomizu.

"Why are we going so far?" he asks. "I

saw some cool-looking bars right near your apartment."

"We can't go to those places," I tell him. "Some big guys sit at the doors and checks IDs. If you can't prove you're over 21, you can't get in."

"Twenty-one?" he asks. A look of shock clouds his perfect features. "Is there any other country with such a high drinking age?"

"Only the Arab countries," I tell him. "They don't allow drinking at all. In America, only Utah and some counties in The South are Arab countries."

Because I know the bouncer, the owner, and the bartender at Bar Nomizu, we have no trouble getting in. Metesky, the bartender, leans over to me.

"Listen Mykel," he says, "we've been having trouble. So could you please sit in the back, behind that partition. The cops never look there." With a tilt of his head, Metesky indicates the back room.

Sven shrugs in disbelief, but follows me behind the partition. We slip into one of three booths hidden from the big room. The waitress, a beautiful Egyptian-looking goddess with a not-quite Dominican ass, comes to take our drink orders.

"I'll have an Aas Boch," I tell her. "And a Brooklyn Lager for my pal here."

As I speak, Sven reaches into his shirt pocket to remove a pack of cigarettes. He taps the pack against his hand, and skims off the outside cellophane.

"You're not going to smoke in here, are you?" asks the waitress.

"No," answers Sven with a straight face. "My plan was to take a cigarette and shove it up my ass, while I masturbate to Bon Jovi on the jukebox."

"That's okay," says the waitress with a straighter face. "As long as you don't smoke it."

When she leaves, I explain New York's smoking ban and Sven puts away his cigarettes. Before long the beer comes. We toast to things shoved up anuses.

"So," I say, "tell me about your adventures till now."

"I hope you have a lot of time," he says. "It's been... interesting."

I take heed of the throbbing between my legs.

"Don't take two long," I say, "I need some... er... sleep."

"Here's the story," he says.

It was a pain in the ass to get here in the first place. The U.S. government requires biometric *data in our passports. The Norwegian government didn't like this idea very much and protested. The U.S., agreed to postpone the requirement for a year. Next year, they're going to have to do a retina scan or something. Right now, the airline has to supply the U.S. government with a passenger list, and enough information to check credit card purchases and other personal stuff. The government keeps this information for seven years. They say it's anti-terrorist. Like terrorists are going to charge their plastic explosives to American Express.*

So I land at Logan Airport, in Boston. When I get there, the passengers have to split into two groups: Americans and everyone else. I don't know what happens to the Americans, but the rest of us have to go through processing. Some government officer finger prints us, makes us sign a form, and puts all the documents into a computer.

After immigration, I collect my bag from the airport carrousel. The lock is broken. It looks like some one ripped the bag open.

I complain to the service desk. The lady behind the desk, a huge black woman...

"Poundage-challenged person of color," I correct him. He frowns and continues.

She says that it was probably the U.S. government that opened the bags. I should know, she tells me. Bags have to be left open when checked. Inspectors need to rifle them freely. The broken lock is not her responsibility.

So, I'm carrying my broken bag through customs, and the guy at the green door asks if I have any fruits, vegetables, or other food from abroad. I tell him no and he wrinkles his eyebrows like he doesn't believe me. I get the feeling I'm going to have to strip for him. He is not attractive.

Luckily, there's this swarthy guy behind me. Looks like he's from Turkey or somewhere. The inspector forgets about me and pounces on him.

"Could you follow me, sir?" he asks the guy.

As I look back the two of them are going into some room off to the side. I decide I'd better hightail it out of there.

My buddy Al, is waiting for me. After I explain the delay, we go out to his car and head into Boston. It seems like a nice city.

"The baseball team sucks," I say.

I wouldn't know, he continues. *We make plans to meet the next day at Boston University. We'll meet at the clock tower at 4PM.*

I get there early. A guard at the gate asks me for ID. I show him my passport and he takes it.

"You'll get this back when you leave," he says.

I walk through the campus. On one of those very green paths, I see a couple of girls. They're just like the guys on the old TV show.... They still play it in Norway... You know, the one with the fat bus driver and the guy who works in the sewer?"

"The Honeymooners?" I ask. "With Jackie Gleason."

"I guess so," he continues. *"So this pair of girls looks just like them. A fat one dresses in black, with a hat like a bus driver's. The other girl is skinny, with blue overalls, and a long narrow face. I smile at them, laughing at the funny image.*

"The fat one stops and turns. She moves right in front of me. This close..."

He moves his head toward mine until our noses are almost touching.

"Are you a student here?" she asks me.

I tell her no, I'm just visiting a friend.

"Do you know I could have you removed from campus?" she asks. "If you were a student you'd be thrown out. There are rules... official rules... against **inappropriate laughter.** *And you are guilty.*

A man comes over. I guess he's a kind of policeman. A patch on his sleeve says B.U. SECURITY.

"We call 'em the campus cops," I tell Sven. "They're a private police force who enforce college rules or call the real cops if they want to."

Well, he comes over and the girls tell him how I was inappropriately laughing. The sides of his mouth turn down.

"Can I see some ID?" he says to me.

"I had to leave it at the gate," I tell him.

"I think you'd better leave, sir," he says. "We don't want any trouble."

The guard walks me to pick up my passport and escorts me off campus. Somehow, I find my way back to Al's place. It's in Cambridge somewhere, near a Taco Bell. I park myself on the front porch waiting for him to come home. I have a book, so I won't be bored. Not that I have a chance to read it.

"What are you doing?" asks a real cop, passing by on the street.

"Waiting for a friend," I tell him.

"We don't allow loitering here," he says. "Where are you from?"

"Norway," I say.

"Got any ID?" he asks.

I show him my passport and he looks at the picture. Then he looks at me. Then he looks at the picture again.

"Okay," he tells me, "but I'll be around here in an hour. If you're still here, I'm running you in."

I decide it's time to leave Boston.

I meet Al and tell him I want to leave the next day. I use my plane pass, and travel stand-by to New York. I carry my bag with me this time, not risking further damage by over-eager security people.

After showing my passport to check in for the local flight, I pass through the x-ray security system. Then I go to the gate. At the gate, there is a table and some chairs roped off to the side.

I wait until they call my row number. I show my boarding card and the guy at the gate says, "I'm sorry sir, could you step over there?"

He motions to the table. I walk over. There's another man behind the table. He's slipping on a pair of latex gloves. This is not encouraging.

"Please put your bags on the table," he says. "Then remove your shoes."

He opens my bag and begins to unpack it. He takes out my underwear, piece by piece, squeezing each piece in his hands. Then my toiletry kit, pulling out my band-aids, condoms, and allergy pills, examining each.

Not saying a word, he throws everything back into my bag. Trying to zip it, he notices the broken lock.

"What happened here?" he asks.

"You guys did that," I tell him. "It was opened by airport security."

He shrugs. "Oh well," he tells me. "It's for your own protection."

Finally, they let me on the plane and I can make it to New York. That's when I saw you at the airport. By the way, I'm REALLY tired.

So we go back to my place.

"Hey," says Sven, anticipating me. "Why don't you turn on the porno channel? It might be... er... relaxing."

"This is America," I tell him. "Some cable channels show a breast or two, but there's no porno channel. You think we're in Brazil? Congress is passing laws because Janet Jackson showed a single tit."

"I guess you'll have to rent it from the library," he says.

I laugh.

"The library doesn't have porno," I tell him. "Besides, a new law says the library has to give the Feds lists of borrowers and what they borrow. Even more, they can't tell you someone is spying on you."

"What a fucked law!" says Sven. "Is there a name for such a thing?"

"It's called the Patriot Act," I explain. "Speaking of fucked... what are you..."

Damn! He's asleep... without even taking off his clothes.

The next day we agree to meet at the school where I work. At first he wants to wear a cool FUCK BUSH t-shirt. I advise him against it.

"A teen was arrested for wearing a *Peace Now* t-shirt to a shopping mall," I tell him. "FUCK BUSH could get your nipples chopped off."

Sven shakes his head, but changes to his dirty KAFKA PROCESS shirt. I leave to teach.

When I get out of class, there's a message for me, written in awful English by the Japanese receptionist.

DOWNSTAIRS SECURITY CALLED TO US. A MR. DELGATSEN WAS FOR YOU. HE DOWNSTAIRS, BUT WE DON'T KNOW HIM, SO THEY WON'T LET HIM. HE MEET YOU OUTSIDE AFTER CLASS. NINE O'CLOCK

At nine, I leave school and meet Sven on the street.

"I've been wandering around for hours," he says. "I tried to see you earlier, but they wouldn't let me up."

I tell him I got the message.

"They told me I needed ID to enter the building," he says. "Can you imagine? ID to get into a fucking building?"

"And what is it with the cameras?" he continues. "I took a walk around mid-town today. In every street, on the side of one building or another is a TV camera. The building where you work... not only do they have a camera outside, but there's a little camera inside the door. Up high near the molding."

"There's one in every elevator," I tell him. "And that's nothing. Check out the parks. They have cameras in the trees."

"Amazing!" he says. "Don't people complain? How can you stand being watched every minute: picking your nose or scratching your balls?"

"Americans are suckers," I tell him. "Just say it's FOR SECURITY. They'll do anything. Put up with anything: body cavity probes, flashing an ID to cross the street. Anything."

"Well, they could never get away with it in Norway," he tells me. "People would riot."

"Let's go for a drink," I suggest.

"Okay," he answers and we head for the local bar.

"Can I see your ID?" says the guy at the door.

"I'm sixty two years old!" I tell him. "I fucked your grandmother."

It doesn't work and we find ourselves back at Bar Nomizu. Again in the back seats.

A group of dumb jocks... er... mesomorphic verbally-challenged young men... come in and take one of the other two booths in the back. Our doesn't know them, so she checks IDs. When she leaves, they continue a conversation apparently started outside.

"Yea, I just got back from Europe," says a burly guy with short black hair and no neck. "It's lucky they got McDonalds there. They can't make a good hamburger by themselves."

We can hear the TV in the background. Seems like there's been a big marijuana bust in Brooklyn. Sven tells me that a recent Norwegian government panel has recommended complete decriminalization of the herb. As it is, no one goes to jail for it... there.

Then, the news switches to South Africa. We can't hear the details, but the reporter, a female with a slightly nasal voice, is talking about the former president.

"And Nelson Mandela," she says. "That great African American..."

"What?" asks Sven. "He's not an American. There's nothing American about him. What is she talking about? He's a Negro, not an African American."

"Shhhhhhhhhh!" I warn. "You can't say Negro anymore. People will get angry. It's like saying Oriental instead of Asian or Eskimo instead of Inuit."

"But Asian means the *same* as Oriental," he answers. "It means 'from the East.' And besides, Arabs are Asians, but they aren't Orientals."

"I'm only telling you the rules," I say. "I didn't make them."

Sven lowers his voice to a whisper. "Americans," he says shaking his head. "You can't see porn on TV. You can't say Negro or Oriental... or even laugh inappropriately. You're checked for ID three or four times a day. You need an ID to get into a building for fuck's sake. The government fingerprints visitors. You're not allowed to buy alcohol or tobacco until you're 21. You can go to jail for something as harmless as pot. I don't get it."

I shrug.

"Another thing I don't get," he says gradually raising his voice. "Can Americans really be that dumb? Don't they know how everybody in the world hates them? Hates their brutality, their disregard for human life? Don't they know the world cheered the Twin Towers attack because they hate America's arrogance?"

One of the jocks in the booth in back of us turns around. I see he's wearing a Red Sox hat. The bright B stares at me like a cyclops' eye.

"Hey fucker," he says. "Go back to Sweden, if you don't know. That's not why the towel-heads attacked us! They attacked us because they're jealous of our freedom."

ENDNOTES: (*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*)

—>*Truth is the seed of fiction dept:* In case you're wondering, all airline/immigration requirements mentioned in this column are part of current U.S. law, including the check of recent credit card information.

As for the laughing: in 1998, a student at Sarah Lawrence College was found guilty of "inappropriate laughter" and sentenced to view the video "Homophobia," read "Homophobia on Campus" and write a paper on "homophobia."

Nat Hentoff writes of another incident at the same school. He reports that they suspended a guy for a year for *inappropriate laughter.* Check the info for yourself at: http://www.umich.edu/~newsinfo/MT/94/Jun94/mt8j94.html

—>*Flag-waving lefties dept.* Why is it that every liberal group has to have AMERICA or AMERICAN in its name? AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY, AMERICAN NETWORK, and my newest piece of junkmail: AMERICA COMING TOGETHER. "Send Bush back to Texas," they say.

It's as if the liberals are so anxious to prove how patriotic they are, they want to out patriotize the patriots of the right.

And the right? They've got FAMILY, and RELIGIOUS and ENTERPRISE. Rarely anything AMERICAN. I guess they have nothing to prove.

—>*How about that wall of separation?* dept: Not only is it between church and state, but university and state that needs a wall between them. But you probably already know universities take bucketloads of cash from the Feds.

The only school that tells the government to shove its funds is Hillsdale College, an extremely right wing school in Michigan. Maybe everyone else could learn a lesson. Because it's PAYBACK TIME.

The "International Studies in Higher Education Act," proposed in congress, would create an oversight committee to check "anti-American" bias in University "Middle East Studies" departments. Now if that doesn't have the ring of an earlier era, I don't know what does.

—>*That kills the move to Canada* dept: The *Ottawa Citizen* reports that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police invaded the home and office of Juliet O'Neil. She's a reporter for that paper.

O'Neil wrote about Maher Ara, a Canadian citizen who was deported to Syria by the US. In Syria, he was tortured.

The Mounties, in American style, went through O'Neil's household garbage, bedding, lingerie drawer and "sifted the contents of her kitty-litter box," looking for the source who leaked Maher's security dossier to O'Neil.

The raid took place on January 21 of this year and has been dubbed "The Mountie Panty Raid."

—>*Off with their heads dept.* I'm writing this during the investigation of the U.S. torture of Iraqi prisoners. The only people I can imagine who this would shock are Americans.

The rest of the world knows this is standard operating procedure for American interrogators. Just ask Amnesty International about what goes on at Guantanamo Bay. They'll tell you. America is the king of the torturers. Although, unlike the Israelis who are proud of their torture, we don't like to admit it.

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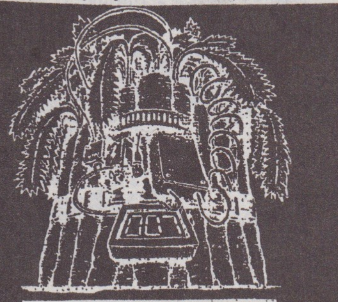

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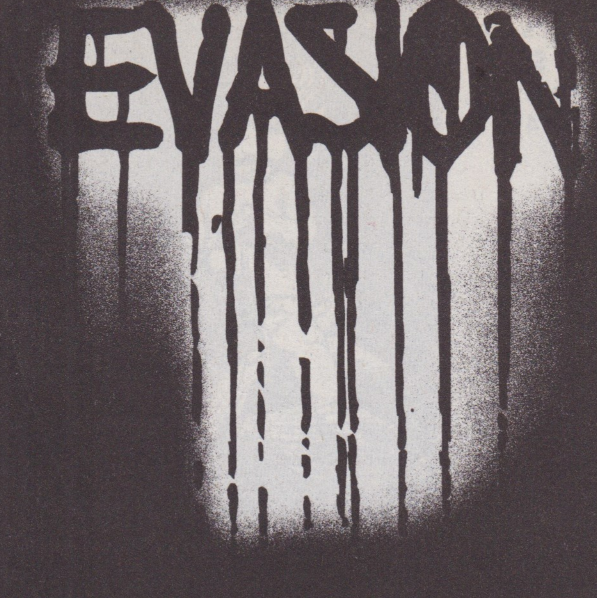

New book - Fall 2004

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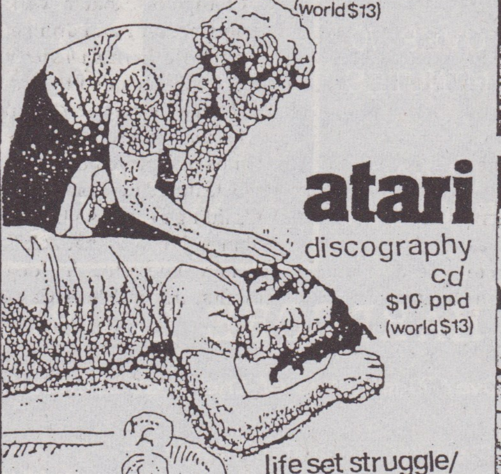

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It's probably illegal for me to applaud the decapitation of the captured American civilian in Iraq, so I won't do it. If it were legal, I'd say, LET THERE BE MORE. I would say, that the U.S. government is so brutal, so evil, that there can't be enough beheadings. I'd say that since the end of World War II, no other country has killed as many people as the U.S. I'd say any American, civilian or soldier, who sets foot in Iraq deserves the worst. A torrent of heads! A bowling alley full! Shiploads! I'd say any American soldier, anywhere in the world is also fair game.

Fuck Islamic Law, I'd say. Let's have some good ole Jew-Christian eye-for-an-eye stuff. Cut American military balls off, I'd say. Send 'em to the wife, I'd say. Make every little kid fear joining the army from the get-go, I'd say.

But I would probably be arrested... and tortured... for saying that. So I won't.

—>*Publication for the rest of us* dept: I wanna thank Max from WWIX (one of NY's premier scumrock bands) for showing me the salvation offered by MODERN DRUNKARD magazine. With articles like: *Blackout Strategies For The Beginning Alcoholic* and *Top Shelf Love*, could life get any better?

Check it out for yourself at www.moderndrunkardmagazine.com.

—>*Even more dept:* Julie Oh sends me the following. (I've edited it slightly.):

Bill Nevins, a New Mexico high school teacher was fired last year. Classes in poetry and the poetry club at Rio Rancho High School were permanently terminated.

The "Slam Team" was a group of teenage poets who asked Nevins to serve as their faculty adviser. Rio Rancho High School gave the Slam Team access to the school's closed-circuit television once a week and the poets thrived.

In March 2003, a Slam Team teenage girl presented one of her poems before an audience at Barnes & Noble bookstore in Albuquerque. Then, she read it live on the school's closed-circuit television channel.

A school military liaison and the high school principal accused the girl of being "un-American" because she criticized the war in Iraq and the Bush administration's failure in education.

The girl's mother, also a teacher, was ordered by the principal to destroy the child's poetry. The mother refused and may lose her job.

Bill Nevins was suspended for not censoring the poetry of his students. The he was fired. Later, posters done by art students were ordered torn down. Some were satirical, implicating a national policy that had led us into war. Art teachers who refused to rip down the posters in their classrooms were not given contracts to return to the school.

The teachers union has been joined in a legal action against the school by the National Writers Union. NWU's at-large representative, Samantha Clark, lives and works in Albuquerque.

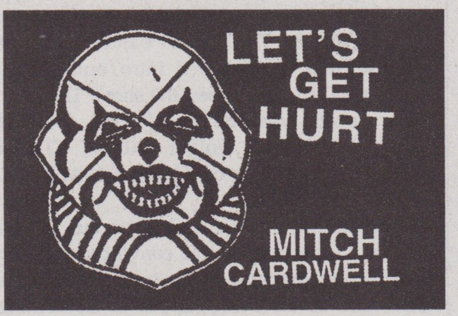
The American Civil Liberties Union has become the legal arm of the lawsuit pending in federal court. Meanwhile, Nevins applied for a teaching post in another school and was offered the job but he can't go to work until Rio Rancho's principal sends the new school Nevins' credentials. The principal has refused to do so.

In other news: Writers and editors who have spent years translating essays, films, poems, scientific articles and books by Iranian, North Korean and Sudanese authors have been warned not to do so by the U.S. Treasury Department, under penalty of fine and imprisonment. Publishers and film producers are not allowed to edit works authored by writers in those nations. The Bush administration contends doing so has the effect of trading with the enemy, despite a 1988 law that exempts published materials from sanction under trade rules.

Robert Bovenschulte, president of the American Chemical Society, is challenging the rule interpretation by violating it to edit into English several scientific papers from Iran.

—>*Want more? dept*: Bushites have put pressure on the Federal Drug Administration to prevent a "morning after" contraceptive from going over-the-counter.

Researchers on the FDA's own staff recommended approving the pill without a prescription. But, for the first time, senior FDA officials overruled their own scientists. How could they be so stupid? Just think what a different place this might be if Bush's mom had that pill.



As promised, this month's column will be devoted to the 2004 Chicago Blackout, a weekend of great bands, pants-pooping and drunken debauchery thrown by those *Horizontal Action* hellions. While I never really intended to write a non-record column, I think this subject doesn't stray far from my normal area of coverage. Virtually all of the bands that played this event have had their records featured here on a regular basis, so I think it's fitting to obsess a little bit on the live side of things. I'm sure that *MRR*'s readers aren't especially interested in long-winded rants on my first trip to White Castle (amazing) or my impressions of Old Style (gets you fucked up), so I'll try to keep the report to punk-related items. No promises though.

In making the arrangements for this trip, I had stalled on a few details (like, uh, the tickets for the shows) because I was so damn nervous about flying. I thought if I had an easy out (no place to stay, for example), I could avoid the torture of air travel. I've hated airplanes my entire life, due in part to the fact that I am a gargantuan fat ass and simply can't fit inside them. Mostly, I just hate dying. I'm not particularly scared of getting hijacked or anything. I'm just really fucking scared of crashing. I get on planes only when I simply *have* to. I'd never get on a plane to see family or see the world. Fuck that shit. This Blackout thing was something I felt like I had to go to, you know, as a professional and all (shut it). Since I can pretty much only afford to fly on airlines that have death hoopties in their fleet, hopefully you have some idea of how fucking shitty this process is for me. I'm not someone that puts much faith into the whole "better living through chemistry" thing (unless you've got any smack), but I was compelled to actually use my bullshit health insurance and get some happy pills. I'd like to say that I'm brave and "adult" enough to deal with something like this, but I'm a huge weenie...a huge weenie with a bottle full of pills strong enough to knock out a rhino. Needless to say, I barely remember the flight out.

In an effort to remain a total and complete fucking mess for the entire trip, I started drinking and eating really fucked up food as soon as I checked in. The pharmaceutical haze wore off just in time to make it to The Empty Bottle for the start of the show. Fittingly, HEADACHE CITY, a new Chicago band, kicked off the weekend. For those who don't already know, HEADACHE CITY, features folks from WHITE+OUTS and Norah of Shit Sandwich records fame. I used what little cred I had to weasel a demo outta these guys a few months prior to The Blackout, so I was excited to see if they delivered live, which they did. These folks play great keyboard driven punk that owes more to actual garage than the current crop of neo-wave buzzers. They started things off right, and their sounds continue to ring in my head (I'll throw you dorks a vinyl bone and hip you to their *Knee Jerk Reaction* 7"EP, released on Shit Sandwich).

WINKS guitarist Penny Tration (formerly of THE DIRTY SWEETS) is a familiar face to the *Horizontal Action* crowd, having graced the cover in a previous issue. Anyway, The Winks 7"EP on Super Secret was moderately impressive, but the live show didn't do much for me. Maybe I've just seen the same thing done better by DEADLY WEAPONS too many times. Who knows? There wasn't anything overtly "yuck" about them, but I was left pretty unexcited. I'm told that their recent Bay Area shows were great, so maybe I'm ass backwards or something. I'll have to see them again.

If you haven't flipped for THE LIDS' EP on Die Slaughterhaus, where have you been? They came off much-fuller sounding live than on record, no doubt due to the number of different vocalists that made up the band. Imagine THE SHANGRI-LAS playing with the snot and speed of LOLI AND THE CHONES. Great stuff! An album is rumored to be appearing on Rip Off records, and they have some other releases planned (on Yakisakana?), so keep an eye out.

Closing out Night #1 was THE DEADLY SNAKES, a band I've wanted to see for ages. Probably the only bona-fide dance band of the entire weekend, their Blackout set exceeded my expectations, which were already high. Their set focused on tunes from their latest album,

Ode To Joy, which I consider to be their strongest yet. Their garagey R&B seemed a bit out of place considering the 'tude-driven nature of 99% of the bands playing, but they were one of the highlights in my opinion. It should be mentioned that THE DEADLY SNAKES played my girlfriend's favorite set of the entire weekend.

I woke up hangover free, surprisingly. To kick of the second day, there was a Blackout party at Delilah's thrown in cooperation with the fine, brilliant folks behind WatchMeEatAHotDog.Com. This was to include a set by THE BASEBALL FURIES and…hot dogs. I was really looking forward to consuming as many "Chicago-Style" hot dogs as I could, but when I made my rounds, I didn't see a single fucking frank. *Bullshit!!* Maybe I wasn't looking hard enough. Maybe they saw how fucking fat I am and hid them from me. Either way, I was bummed. To top it off, THE BASEBALL FURIES didn't even fucking play!

If Night #1 was the "garage" night, Night #2 definitely was the "chaos" night. THE DIRGES, another new Chicago band featuring folks from BASEBALL FURIES and THE BRIDES, got things rolling. Although one would think they'd be snotty punk powerhouse, The Dirges' sound is far different from what you might expect. While both feet are still firmly planted in punk, the tunes had a soul/R&B feel to them that really beefed things up. Check out the *Maybe Chicago?* compilation CD on Criminal IQ/Protomersh for a taste. I predict their upcoming single on Missile X will be a scorcher.

Next up was CATHOLIC BOYS, Wisconsin's prime punk offenders. I was told that, due to the special occasion, The CB's were going to attempt to play their first ever show (somewhat) sober. I thought this was a bad idea, but I then I realized that these guys probably couldn't stay sober if they tried. They took the stage and just *exploded!* I expected them to be good, but I didn't expect them to run away with my coveted "Best Set Of The Weekend" award, which is exactly what they did. Ultra-speedy, ultra-snotty wild punk rock the way it's supposed to be played. Get their *Psychic Voodoo Mind Control* album on Trickknee/Dropkick immediately and bite your nails in anticipation over their upcoming Bancroft records single. What a fantastic band!

Most folks seemed to be really, really into THE REAL LOSERS. While I'm not all that hot on them, I understand the allure and had a rockin' good time watching them play. Spot-on early Rip Off records era punk: no frills, all trash. They did a mini-tour with CATHOLIC BOYS immediately after The Blackout, so hopefully you had a chance to see them.

I expected big things from CPC GANG-BANGS. Fuck, anything SPACESHITS related requires my undivided attention. Seemed like a lot of folks were more excited to see the dude from *Fubar*'s band (a movie I still haven't seen) than what was essentially a revamped DAY-LIGHT LOVERS, but hey, what the fuck do I know? They were a little more "rawk" than I expected (far different for their High School Refuse single, back when they were just The Gangbangs), but it was still cool. Glad I got to see them and all, but what followed seemed to be the big story of the event.

I saw THE REATARDS in San Francisco soon after *Teenage Hate* came out. To this day, it remains one of the wildest, scariest and best shows I've ever seen. I knew there was no way a mid-twenties Jay Reatard could (or would even want to) re-live his self-destructive days with The Reatards, but this reunion show at The Blackout came pretty damn close. While not nearly as insane as they were originally, their reunion set really drove home just how classic Jay's Reatards tunes are. They were really tight, plenty destructive and brilliant. While I maintain that The Catholic Boys were my top pick, there's simply no denying how fantastic it was to see The Reatards again. Who knows if I'll ever have the chance again? For those who missed them, (vinyl bone #2) the closest to them you'll get on the new *Live* LP Goner released in celebration of THE REATARDS' return. I'd act quickly…

The final day of The Blackout was the longest, biggest and best of the lot. Prior to the show, there was a special Blackout "episode" of *The Brian Costello Show With Brian Costello*, a live-in-the-bar talk show hosted by (duh) Brian Costello, the drummer for THE FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS, which was held at The Empty Bottle in the afternoon. The show was modeled after *The Tonight Show* or *Late Night*: opening monologue, wacky co-host (KENSUKE "KEN" KAGAWA), house band, skits, interviews and musical guests. The "house band" was THE KRUNCHIES, who played intro/outro music and several songs to open the show. The interview guests were Sonny Vincent (of THE TESTORS), Timmy Vulger (late of CLONE DEFECTS, currently of THE HUMAN EYE) and…Mitch Cardwell?

Naturally, I was fucking nervous to be a part of the festivities and convinced that my sole purpose for being there was to be burned at the stake as an *MRR* hippie or something. Nothing could be further from the truth. Much to my surprise, Brian treated me like a semi-serious guest who might, somehow, have something interesting to say. I basically talked about how the *MRR* honchos constantly eat burritos and have really fucking important meetings about anarchy, peace and freedom. I also said I liked JOURNEY and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. How's that for interesting? If you think my columns are shit, thank your lucky fucking stars that you weren't there to see me on stage with a microphone. Anyway, about 6% of my comments seemed to go over pretty well with the crowd, confirming their suspicions about the secret society of *MRR* (all of which are true…really). Although I was nervous (and, it should be mentioned, completely fucking smashed), I had a really great time on Costello's show. Hopefully my interview didn't backfire in Costello's (and the audience's) face, as I found him to be a really cool guy, quite the opposite from what last year's reports made him out to be. After my interview, I felt like I was the biggest asshole there, which is still strangely comforting. Who knew?

Considering how hard of an act I am to follow, THE TYRADES had their hands full. This crowd had just witnessed greatness, so I'm sure Jimmy Hollywood's stomach was filled with butterflies. However, I'm gonna go out on a limb and say that THE TYRADES were actually better than me that night. A bit unexpected, I know, but trust me on this one. Of all the times I've seen them, their set here was tops. A short, killer set…Fucking fantastic.

Still basking in the glow of international super stardom, I decided to ride the "L" (El? Elle?) Train for an hour to catch M.O.T.O. at a suburban sports bar. I think the fact that I was already wasted at four in the afternoon also had something to do with my willingness to go along. Anyway, I followed a bunch of "in-the-know" people to the club and got there just in time to catch their last four or five tunes. What can I say? Alternating band members for pee breaks, saying hello to everyone that walks in, infectious tunes…a total riot. Incredible hair too.

We got back to The Empty Bottle and basically missed THE GUILTY PLEASURES. I think I caught a song or two, but my memory of this period is sketchy at best. We were in a hurry to get back because there was no way I was going to miss CLOROX GIRLS. I only saw them one time while they lived in the Bay Area, and this was before I freaked out over their single and LP. Needless to say, they brought some much-needed enthusiasm to the evening (kept my ass from dragging, at least). At one point, due to strings breaking and general equipment mayhem, Justin just dove into the crowd. He was pretty sweaty.

As long as I've been an OBLIVIANS fan, I've never seen them or any of the members' newer bands. Jack Yarber seems to have the most bands going at one time, and THE KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS were picked to play The Blackout. While it was great to finally see an OBLIV' strut his stuff, I was left wanting more. I love their SSLD single, but live, they were sort of a letdown.

A lot of Rip Off records devotees were front and center to heckle G.Lo and THE ZODIAC KILLERS. How was this (almost) avoided? Well, the band shows a twenty-fucking-minute-ZODIAC KILLERS music video *before* they take the stage. There was a room full of sweaty, drunk, shit-talking assholes watching music videos of songs *they were about to fucking play* before they played them. This is actually the only show I've seen them play where this little stunt worked, so I suppose you could consider it a success. Anyway, the screen comes down, the latex nurse uniforms and trench coats come out and the crowd appeared to really fucking enjoy themselves. It was definitely one of the better sets I've seen them play (and the first I'd seen with new drummer, Bill from NEW BOMB TURKS). Maybe the good response was enough to get them out on the road?

I must say that the majority of reformed "classic" punk bands I've seen have almost always been disappointments. When you go to see these bands, there's the risk of them blowing it, tarnishing your perfect perception of them.

For example, I haven't been able to enjoy my REZILLOS, REAL KIDS and DMZ records nearly as much after seeing them. These ideas were front and center before THE TESTORS took the stage. I was convinced it was going to suck. Then they started playing. And not sucking. And then, finally, being really fucking good! A lot of reports I read focused on how good the backing band (three folks from ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT) was, but I was far more impressed by how great Sonny was. Every tune was perfect! The crowd went fucking crazy! I got chills during "Lets Get Zoed Out"...mainly because I was. There was nowhere to go but home after seeing them. I even managed to stay drunk enough to hold onto enough happy pills for the flight home, which departed (I shit you not) three hours after THE TESTORS last song.

I know a lot of people have problems with some of the stuff *Horizontal Action* does, but I can say that this event was completely free of the "jocky" shit that people tend to call them out on. I didn't see a single "spread-shot" or witness any harassment of female band or audience members. They didn't give away porn (not to me, anyway). It was just a bunch of people into seeing some really good bands. Ya know, probably a lot like Prank Fest...Anyway, considering how obsessive I am about a lot of the stuff coming out of the Midwest right now, it was great seeing and meeting a lot of the bands I've been writing about in my column over the past two years. It was also fantastic to *finally* meet some of my partners in crime from *Blank Generation* and *Terminal Boredom*, some of the finest know-it-all assholes in the world. All in all, this was one of the best punk-related outings I've been lucky enough to attend, and would go back next year without a second thought.

The record bullshit will be back next month, so save your dough for what I'm sure will be a double-sized column. If you are adventurous and want to tell me how much you hate me in person, I'm playing tag-along on a U.S. tour with SHORT EYES this summer (6/25/04 till 7/17/04), an incredible new band from Oakland, CA Short Eyes features *MRR* staffers Vince Horner and Icki Murrmann along with some folks from BATTLESHIP and THE SORES. I'll be the big fat guy picking up glass and teeth after their shows. For a more detailed look at the tour, check the Raw Deluxe ad in this issue or visit http://www.lipstickkillers.com/shorteyes. Jesus help them, 'cause man won't! Mitch Cardwell PO Box 23882, Oakland, CA 94632 letsgethurt@yahoo.com

CrimethInc.
Workers' Collective Bullet-in

Hold the d-beats and three-chord progressions for a second; it's time for another column in our how-to series—this one covering the ins and outs of facing serious charges in court. Whether you're smashing corporate windows for political reasons or just getting beaten by police for being a vagrant, this is something you may have to face at some point if you stick it out in the punk community—so read carefully, and pass it on. By the by, before summer has ended we'll finally have published the enormous book in which all these recipes will be collected. If you're curious about that, or want to get a free copy of any of our various propaganda papers (the new Harbinger, the Fighting For Our Lives reprint, the "Don't Just Vote, Get Active" campaign manifesto, etc.), please contact us at CrimethInc./Night Classes at F.S.U., P.O. Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402 USA, or seek radiation sickness at www.crimethinc.com.

HOW TO SURVIVE A FELONY TRIAL
or, There and Back Again, by Marco Baggins

This piece was written for anyone who is facing prison time as a result of involvement in the struggle for a socially and ecologically sustainable future for the planet we live on and the beings that inhabit it. It may also be relevant to anyone engaged in that struggle whose activity is likely to lead to a collision at some point with the massive edifice of inertia that is the legal system. I speak from experience, but I am not a lawyer or any sort of legal expert. Take everything I say with a grain of salt. My thoughts are with you, whoever you are.

Uh-oh. Somehow something went wrong, and you are in deep shit. All signs are pointing to the inescapable conclusion that this is going to go badly. You are absolutely terrified. You sure didn't expect this to happen today. Who's going to feed your cat? You've got to pay rent next Friday. You can't go to jail right now. What the hell is going to happen to you? OK. Stay calm. Let's take a few deep breaths, and a few steps backward, before we address the situation at hand.

First off, understand one thing. Repression, both legal and extra-legal, is an absolutely inevitable result of revolutionary activity. The only way you can hope to avoid it entirely is if you hang up your spurs and cease your efforts to contest this insane world order. You know you couldn't look yourself in the mirror in the morning if you did that. Besides, for some people—maybe you—of some backgrounds and histories and skin colors, even total acquiescence with the status quo is not enough to ensure immunity from its wrath. The rationale behind all of this, from the perspective of the people in power, is extremely straightforward. They want to make an example of somebody. They want to parade someone around and say, "See? See what happens when you step out of line? You don't want this to happen to you, do you? Do you?" Inconveniently, that someone is you.

This sort of negative reinforcement is a sensible and effective strategy. It has been perfected since the dawn of civilization, and it works well in a limited way. Sometimes people do give up and yield to the crushing embrace of defeatism and bitterness. Under certain circumstances people will crack under pressure and turn on each other. Some spirits are broken. When subjected to torture almost anyone will say or do almost anything. I know a little bit about that. But the corollary here is that repression drives us together out of necessity, and I truly believe that its net effect is generally to create more resistance than it destroys.

All of that being said, common sense dictates that there are some basic guidelines that it will behoove you to understand when making your plans. The more active you are, the more likely it is that you will eventually encounter the legal apparatus. The more effective, aggressive, inspiring, or illegal your efforts are, the more likely it is that this encounter will be particularly unpleasant. A serious criminal trial is no fun. It is terrifying, time-consuming, expensive, and dangerous. Being arrested and tried in a court of law is a hopefully-avoidable consequence of whatever it is that you are doing, not any sort of desirable end in and of itself. It pays to plan actions that maximize effect while minimizing lawbreaking. I am absolutely not saying that you should not break the law. I am saying that a deed's worth is measured by its effectiveness, not its illegality. Don't conflate the two.

If and when you do decide to do something illegal, sit down beforehand at a library and figure out exactly what statutes you are likely to be violating. Figure out what the maximum penalty for violating those statutes is likely to be. Ask yourself dispassionately if you can deal with what it will mean to you if everything goes as badly as it possibly can. If the answer is no, please, save yourself a hell of a lot of trouble and don't get in over your head. Do something else. There is no shame in that whatsoever. I hate to use such a trite aphorism, but don't do the crime if you can't do the time.

If the answer is yes, then here are a few more tips. It is extremely wise to have some sort of contingency plan in place rather than just charging blindly into a situation that may lead to your arrest. Cultivate relationships with lawyers beforehand. Know to whom you are going to make your one phone call, and what you are going to tell them to do. Memorize a prepaid calling card number so you can use a payphone if necessary. If possible, have bail money set aside. Godspeed, and good luck.

Anyway, all of that is in the past for you now. I have no idea at what point in the process this essay will reach you, so I'll pick back up where I left off, at the beginning. You are sitting in the back of the cruiser, and you are scared. The single most important thing you can do right now is not talk to the police. Not one word. It does not matter what you did or didn't do. It does not matter if you have been caught red-handed doing something unbelievably sketchy, or if you are being targeted in a frame-up job, which extends to the loftiest chambers of international power. You must not talk. This is what you can say: "I'm going to remain silent. I would like to speak with my attorney." Nothing else. I can't possibly stress this enough. If they try to chat you

up about sports that is all that you can say. If they bang your head against the wall that is all that you can say. If the good cop tries to tell you that he is trying to help you out here and then the bad cop gets all up in your grill, if they tell you that they are going to put you in a cell with Big Bad Bob the serial rapist and that he's going to turn you out, and that your friend snitched on you and they know everything already anyway, if they kick you and punch you and grope you and drag you around and deny you food and water and sleep and medical treatment, if they take your clothes from you and soak you down with ice water, or close all the windows and turn the heat up, or handcuff you to a chair and leave you there until you piss and shit yourself, that is still all that you can say. No matter what they say or do you have to say, "I'm going to remain silent. I would like to speak with my attorney," and nothing else. If you slip up and start to talk you absolutely will see every word you speak used against you in court. Eventually they will give up.

You will be in some sort of local or municipal police precinct or substation. Within about forty-eight hours of your arrest you will be given an arraignment. This is your initial appearance before a judge in a criminal case. Specific charges will be lodged against you, a lawyer will be appointed to you if you have not yet secured one, you will enter a plea of guilty or not guilty, and bail will either be set or denied to you, depending on the severity of your charges and a variety of other factors. Regardless of your eventual legal strategy, you almost certainly want to enter a plea of not guilty at this point. Contact your people as soon as you can and tell them to start working on getting you a lawyer and getting you bailed out.

After your arraignment you will probably be moved to the county lockup. This place usually houses people who are awaiting trial, serving relatively short terms, or finishing off the ass end of a sentence from the state penitentiary. You will be given some food, a hot shower, and eventually put into general population. As much as you will hate to admit it the shower will feel really, really good.

This is where you will have to begin to acclimate yourself to the two types of people that your world will be comprised of for the time being, inmates and guards. You will quickly learn that the guards are absolutely the most offensive, foul-mouthed, verbally abusive people on the face of the planet. You will be expected to "Lift ya nuts! Spread ya ass!" at the drop of a hat, you will be given notice that if you "Play the pussy ya get fucked! and you will have to listen to all sorts of talk about "Cocksucker" this and "Faggot" that. Most of this is just to get a rise out of you. If you seem thin-skinned they will never let up. Don't act outright hostile or give them a good excuse to kick your ass—they will do it. Do not cower, grovel, or act too submissive either—this will not set a good tone at all. Stay polite and do not show any sign of weakness. Once the novelty has worn off of you to them it will be easier.

Prisoners and guards have an extremely complex and bizarre relationship. Watch and learn from the subtle and not-so-subtle ways that inmates have of undermining a guard's authority just enough to get what they want or need, but not quite enough to get their heads kicked in. Be extremely cautious and judicious about doing so yourself, though, especially when you are new and especially if you are not perceived as being a part of the incarcerated class, which is given some leeway to mouth off. Just because the guy next to you can get away with banging a cup on the floor outside his cell and going "Turnkey! How 'bout you get me some fuckin water! Damn!" doesn't necessarily mean that you can.

Jail is Catch-22 in all sorts of ways. For one thing, the richer and whiter you are, the more lenient the court system is with you, but the harder the other prisoners are on you. Where you fit in will depend on the color of your skin, how you carry yourself, and how you talk. Regardless, you have got to come correct. You need to be able to explain yourself, simply and succinctly, in a way that your listener can relate to. Being able to do this well will do more to enhance your quality of life in jail than just about anything else. Do not act all indignant or incessantly proclaim your innocence. Do not gripe and complain. Somebody has got it worse than you, everyone has gotten a raw deal, and nobody wants to hear your sob story.

You will be amazed at the utter lack of security culture amongst many inmates. You will hear all about the armed robberies that your cellmate got away with, how he's got this big plan to get a shit-ton of crank from his man in Chicago, and about how there are bodies on the gun in the shoebox under the bed at his grandma's house and he sure hopes the DA doesn't put the pieces together before his boy Carlos can swing by there to scoop it up. Most of this is pure gas, of course, but some of it is probably true. For god's sake, do not take part in this sort of foolishness. If the state wants you bad enough they can always try to lean on somebody around you to see if you have been talking. If you have been then you have done their job for them, and you will hear about it in court. You can say what you are being charged with—that's already on the record—but at this point not much else. You can talk about your politics if you want to, but not your case.

It varies somewhat from state to state, but within about ten days of your arrest you should be given a preliminary hearing. This is a test of the charges against you. The prosecutor must present evidence and witnesses that prove that a crime has been committed and that there is probable cause to believe that you committed it. This is a much lower legal threshold than the one they have to cross to get a conviction, which is proof "beyond a reasonable doubt". This is a very important hearing, because it will probably be your only chance to see and hear some portion of the testimony and evidence that the state intends to use against at trial. You do not have to testify or present any witnesses or evidence at this hearing, and generally you will not want to, because to do so would simply give the prosecutor the opportunity to hear your side of the story and prepare to refute it. If the judge finds the existence of probable cause—and they usually will—then you will be formally indicted on the charge or charges, and a trial date will be set.

Do your time; don't let it do you. Read, write, exercise, meditate, do whatever you need to do to stay focused and positive. Try not to watch the TV. The world you are in is totally fucked up, but it's not like all of the natural impulses toward mutual aid have been completely smothered out of all of its inhabitants, either. You will start to see some of the really intense ways that inmates do have of looking out for each other. Your cellmate Rico will be sticking a paper clip into the wall socket to get a spark to light a blunt, and you will see that bastard C.O. Parker coming just in time to warn him so that he can slip it under his mattress right before the pig comes barging in, and after Parker has left Rico will say "good looking out, good looking out," which basically means "you and I are in a bad position here and we've got to do what we can to help each other make it through; you just did your part and I appreciate it." You can even learn something from the guys with their arms around each other on Sunday talking about the valley of the shadow of death, or from the Muslims bowing to Mecca and reciting the morning prayers. I am no fan of organized religion, but I know what they are talking about, and why.

If we ecologically-minded anti-authoritarians ever do manage to really put the brakes on our civilization's death march, then we will see large numbers of us imprisoned. Every revolutionary movement anywhere ever has had to deal with this. It is outside the realm of my experience, but we will have to find ways to continue the struggle from inside the penal system—so that incarceration is not the end of the road politically for an individual, but is simply one undesirable, but acceptable, stage of development. There are all sorts of precedents for this historically and globally, from Long Kesh to Kurdistan, Attica, Colombia, and Seattle. Even the gangs are somewhat instructive in this regard, since they have enough power in many prisons to ensure that their members are treated relatively well. This sort of welcoming committee on the inside would take a lot of the terror out of imprisonment, and those of us on the outside would have much less reason to hold back. Do what you can toward this end, but make no mistake, we are a very long way from being there now.

Someone who has spent more time locked up than I have could write far better than I about the minutiae of surviving it, but sufficed to say that, yes, prison is a terrible place, especially when nobody knows you and nobody has your back. People do get beaten and stabbed and raped and killed. I know a little bit about that, as well. I dealt with it by convincing myself that if it came down to the come down a motherfucker was going to have to literally kill me before I was going to get raped. I

felt that I could accept death, and because of this I could avert the one thing that I could not accept. I can't really say, though, because I never had to prove it to myself.

So it won't hurt you to be as physically imposing as possible, or to know how to fight, but don't get it twisted: what is going to help you survive the most will not be your body, but your mouth and your mind. By this I certainly do not mean strutting around talking shit and trying to prove that you are hard. I mean that you will have to earn some respect by carrying yourself honorably, by embodying the struggle for the people and the land like the humble and courageous warrior that you are.

Once you have spent a little bit of time behind bars you will come to a number of pretty visceral realizations. First, that holding a wild animal in captivity is an abominable violation of the spirit of both the captor and the captive, a deadly sin if the word has any meaning at all. You will have time to reflect on how utterly cynical the system that you are trapped in is, how it nurtures all that is most virulent and violent in a person—how it creates, destroys, produces, consumes, and unleashes the monsters that give it everlasting life. Prison makes killers, and killers make prisons, and the rich bastards that are making a killing from the whole sick farce are laughing all the way to the bank.

If you are a man, and if you are wise, you will think about how it feels to be in imminent danger of sexual violence every minute of every day, and about how it must feel to the women who have to deal with that all the time. If you are white you will be given a glimpse of what it is to be a member of a disempowered and endangered racial minority, and of what it must be like for the people of color who have to cope with that predicament all the time.

You will notice that in some respects the whole situation is a lot more honest with the veneer of consent stripped away. It's all about unadulterated force, and nobody pretends that it is not. You do what you are told, whether you like it or not, or else you get hurt.

It will occur to you that there is so much that one can do with a day, an hour, a minute, a week, a month, a year, a life. You will be in awe of how amazingly awesome it would be to walk around your shitty town, hang out with your friends, talk to your mom, play guitar, sleep in someone's arms, masturbate, have sex, cry, pet your cat, cook, hike, drive, sleep in; see the sun, moon, stars, sky, trees, birds and squirrels; or feel fire, rain, and wind. You will not be able to understand how you could have ever taken any of this for granted. On some level that you will not be very comfortable with or proud of, you will feel like a fool for gambling with your freedom; no matter how urgent, imperative, courageous, and noble whatever you did was, it will seem trifling in comparison with all that you have lost. You will swear that if you ever do get out, you will never again let a day pass without squeezing every last drop from it, without being thankful at what a blessing it is to be able to live it—that you will never again lose sight of this heartbreaking wish that you now have to live.

If you do ever get out, you will lose it, but you will always come back to it, or it to you. If you don't get out, then you will have to learn the hard way that what makes life worth living runs so deep in you that nothing can take it away, that you keep it with you wherever you go. Either way, you will never be quite the same again. You will be stronger, or broken.

At some point, hopefully, you will in fact get bailed out, although maybe not if your charges are serious enough or your bail is high enough. If at all possible, regardless of who puts up the money or how it is raised, get the bond posted in your name only, so that if you bounce they can't come after your people. If that big old square-headed guard does come by to tell you that you're going home, then you will witness the amusing spectacle of every hard-ass on your block divvying up your paper, pencils, toothpaste, pillows, towels, blankets, Ramen noodles, toenail clippers, and anything else of value, smiling like kids at Christmas, thrilled to see you leave. Rico will make you promise to smoke a fat-ass blunt for him, kid, and will want you to call his boy Carlos for him. Nothing will ever have been finer than the moment when you finally step outside into the sun, but in some ways getting out is harder than being in, because once you get out you are afraid of going back.

I suppose that this is as good a time as any to bring up a most irksome and vexatious subject—your lawyer. Under the best of circumstances your relationship with this person will be more infuriating and frustrating than just about anything else. You may go through more than one before you settle on the one that you will go to trial with. You don't really need anything more than the public defender for your arraignment, but you need to be getting down to business by the time your preliminary hearing rolls around.

Well-meaning activists—who, incidentally, are not facing prison terms—will be quick to point you to all sorts of sympathetic movement lawyers that your judge will probably hate. Now I'm not saying that it's a bad thing for your lawyer to sympathize with you to at least some degree politically, but that is absolutely not your top concern. All lawyers, even activist lawyers, are mercenaries. You have plenty of friends. You don't need a friend; you need a gunslinger. Your top concern is not your lawyer's politics—although you certainly don't want one who is actively opposed to your own—but his or her trial record, past performance, relationship with judges and prosecutors, and so on. It's a horrible little world to find yourself involved with, but you are, so act accordingly. This is not the time to fuck around. You and your people need to do all of the research you possibly can, and you need to hire yourself the best bastard that you can afford. Obviously, the poorer you are the more thoroughly fucked over you are going to get here. Borrow money from everyone you have ever known if you have to. It completely blows, but it's how the system works. If you are facing serious felony charges, you want the cat that knows where bodies are buried and who has gotten people off of death row.

Other well-meaning activists will tell you all about how you should put the system on trial, represent yourself, use the trial as a forum, denounce capitalism and Western civilization before the court, act wild, and so on. Now, there have been times where this sort of thing has worked, but they have been the exceptions to the rule. Strange courtroom antics are usually only wise for someone who is not facing particularly serious charges and thus has less to lose, or for someone who is either so obviously getting railroaded or is so inarguably guilty by legal standards that something out of left field is the most viable option. All of that pacifist talk about speaking truth to power has its time and place, but I suggest that you think long and hard before you decide to speechify for the benefit of the district attorney, the judge, and the court reporter. Again, there are exceptions. The MOVE organization's fearless, uncompromising, and often victorious battles with the law are one extremely inspiring example. If you are going to go down that road you have got to go all the way, and you better do it well.

The whole game is extremely cynical. The state's goal is to do everything they can to put you away for as long as possible, and your job is to beat your charges without betraying anyone else. If you have a co-defendant or co-defendants, you must create and maintain a bond with them that is so powerful that literally nothing can break it. At every step of the way the state will do everything it can to play you off against one another. You have got to hang together or you will hang alone. This should go without saying, but the one thing that you cannot do is to try to save your ass at someone else's expense. If you have already done this then stop reading my fucking essay this minute, and kill yourself. Seriously.

If you do have co-defendants, it is good policy to agree that none of you will accept any plea bargains without the approval of the others. If there is an extreme disparity in the amount of time that you are looking at, then the person in the deepest should have the final say. Make sure that your lawyer understands that this is your position. Have no illusions about what having a gunslinger in your corner means. Your lawyer will have absolutely no reservations about acting against the best interests of your co-defendants, your associates, the movement, or anyone else who is not paying him or her. Lawyers work for unscrupulous characters all the time that cut each other's throats on the regular. This is normal procedure in their world. Make it clear that this is unacceptable and your lawyer should respect you on some level for it, unless he or she is just a total scumbag.

As your case progresses, you will discover the maddening truth that your troubles are much, much, much more important to you than they are to your lawyer. You will be desperately trying to glean a vital piece of news about the hearing that is coming up in ten days, and he or she will be off in another coun-

ty all week dick-slapping around at the trial of some dude that knocked over a liquor store two years ago. Your lawyer will have a whole host of poor bastards on his or her hands that are each individually every bit as desperate as you are. This, however, is his or her problem, not yours. The squeaky wheel gets the grease, and you've got to do everything you can to make sure that your needs are met. If you let them sweep you under the rug, they will sweep you under the rug. This will all be substantially more problematic if you are still locked up. Call, call, call, and visit the office as necessary. Be extremely courteous and respectful to the secretaries; they hold the keys to the castle. Learn how the various personalities in the office interact, and how to approach who when to get what. Make sure that you don't have a communication breakdown and miss a court date, and get a bench warrant issued for you, and have your bail revoked.

In the name of all that is holy: do not talk to the press about your case, and do not let anyone else do so in your name. Anything you say will come back to haunt you in court. Believe me. Keep yourself out of trouble until your trial if you are out on bail.

While you are awaiting trial your friends and family and supporters will want to know what they can do to help you. This can be somewhat overwhelming, but you will need all the help that you can get. Some help helps, though, and some help hurts. Make sure that anyone acting on your behalf is accountable to you and to what you believe to be your best interests. Beware; be very aware, of anyone who is using you in the service of his or her own agenda, whatever it might be. This may be even harder, but be very, very firm with your family if they flip out and try to get you to cooperate with the authorities because they think that is going to get you out of trouble. It won't. Don't let anybody push you around, even if they love you.

Don't go it alone. Close ranks with the people that you trust with your life, and let them help you. Folks can help you raise bail and legal money, find and research and deal with lawyers, do outreach to put the word out about the case if you decide that is to your advantage, find and locate witnesses and evidence and expert witnesses if that is appropriate, turn people out to the courtroom at your trial and other appearances if that is what you want, secure endorsements from reputable community members, deal with the press in some way if necessary, keep you mentally, emotionally, and spiritually together, and about a thousand and one other things. Listen, always, to those that you trust—but it is your ass in the hot seat, so you had better be calling the shots. Again, this will all be much harder if you cannot get out on bail. If that is the case then your closest supporters will be even more important to you.

Every felony case is a minor legal saga, and every one is different, but one way or another you are going to have some period of time between your preliminary hearing and your trial, with various other hearings, appeals, motions, and grand jury appearances thrown in the mix. The state, depending on how they want to treat you, can take you to trial incredibly quickly, or they can take an extraordinarily long time. Either way it's not too damn pleasant. Study your transcripts and the relevant case law until you know everything backwards and forwards. If you are still locked up you should use the law library every second that you can. There is also an amazing amount of aggregate legal knowledge out there amongst prisoners and jailhouse lawyers that you can draw from. Take everything you hear with a grain of salt, but listen and learn nonetheless. This will all make it easier to deal with your lawyer. Again, though, when talking about your case to any inmate never, ever, discuss what you "did" or "didn't do," only what is relevant to what is on the record from your preliminary hearing about what you "allegedly" did.

This will be a very difficult period of time. Remember who is there for you and who isn't, and never forget it. Do everything you can to improve and affect your situation, but don't dwell on it past that. Find something else to work on, not to the detriment of your case, but enough to keep the abyss from eating you alive.

You will be, by turns, extremely depressed and angry and in denial. You will, in fact, if you are lucky, pass roughly through the classic stages of grief between your arrest and your trial, with all of the madness that entails. You will be absolutely fucking terrified of going back to jail, or of going to prison if you are waiting trial in county. You will contemplate being raped often. You will have nightmares. You will be an unholy pain in the ass to deal with to the people that love you most, and occasionally you will be completely off your rocker. You will resent everyone who has the privilege of forgetting, even for a second, that you have to think about it every minute of every day. You will feel like you have a terminal illness. You will meet people and talk to them and you won't know if they know. You will feel like a drain and a burden on everyone around you. You will find yourself trying to tie up every loose end in your life, and you will catch yourself wondering if this is the last time you will see your grandma, or this lake, or that tree. You will hate people that try to put a sunny face on and tell you that you everything will be all right.

If you are out on bail you will have two other options that will look at least somewhat attractive—going into hiding and killing yourself. I will address them separately. I am not going to say that it never makes sense to run. Sometimes it does. If you are facing nasty felonies, and you know you are going to get convicted, and it's obvious that it's going to go badly, sometimes it is best to get the hell out of Dodge. If you go that route, then my prayers are with you. There's no turning back, ever. Staying free won't be easy, or romantic, or safe, or fun. They will look for you, and if you slip up they will find you. Please, only consider this in the direst of circumstances, and don't even think about it unless you have a specific, viable, concrete plan as to how exactly you are going to live on the lam for the rest of your life. I'd rather do five to ten years than have to hide forever. When you start talking ten to twenty and more is when I might start making other plans.

Concerning suicide, all I can say is that there were times where the one thought that sustained me was that the bastards who were doing this to me were trying to kill me, and that I would be damned if I would do the job for them. It's fucked up, but if you have to keep yourself alive out of sheer spite then that's what you've got to do.

Use the time before your trial to live so that you will have no regrets if you do go to jail. Be as good as you can to the ones you love. Find a way to stare down the barrel of the worst that can happen to you, and accept it. That way you can only be surprised for the better. Call on the spirits and give thanks before you go, if you can. I'm not too proud to admit that I did.

The day will come when you will have to go to the big dance. Get yourself a haircut and some dress clothes and look presentable. Needless to say, one person who is going to have a marked effect on your prospects at this point will be the judge. Your lawyer and the district attorney will both try to monkey with the process to get as favorable a judge as possible onto the case. You will have a choice between a bench trial and a jury trial. In a jury trial, the jury determines innocence or guilt, and the judge imposes the sentence, if any. In a bench trial, the judge determines innocence or guilt, as well as the sentence. You cannot be forced to have a bench trial. You can have a jury trial if you want one. There are situations where either one is preferable. I am no legal expert, but I think it's fair to say that judges are more predictable than juries, which could be good or bad. If the judge has an extremely nasty reputation you definitely don't want a bench trial. If the judge has a good reputation, and the state's case is not very strong, you might do better at the bench. If you are accused of something that a random jury pool is likely to sympathize, with you might do better with a jury. If you are accused of something that a random jury pool is likely to be antagonistic toward, you might do better with the judge. One disadvantage of a bench trial is that it eliminates the possibility of a hung jury. Listen to the advice of your lawyer, listen to your gut instinct, and pray that you are right.

I don't think it ever hurts to pack the courtroom; just make sure that everyone is accountable to you, and does or doesn't do whatever it is that you want them to. Generally the order of events will be as follows: jury selection, followed by defense and then prosecution opening statements, prosecution evidence and witnesses and defense cross-examination, defense evidence and witnesses and prosecution cross-examination, defense and then prosecution closing statements, deliberation, and the rendering of the verdict. How long all this will take depends wholly on how

complicated your case is. There are far too many variables to really get into here, but suffice it to say this is zero hour and it's time to throw down. If you are going to testify then eat some food beforehand so you don't get light-headed. Speak clearly and don't let the DA get you flustered.

And then it will be over. You will either take the short walk around the banister into the arms of someone who loves you, or the long walk with the bailiff, through the back door, down the hall, and back into the system. If you take the short walk, then nothing will ever have been so sublime, and you will swear that you will never take anything for granted ever again, and that you will never forget Rico and everyone else that you left inside, and that you will do everything you can every day for the rest of your life to leave the world a little better. If you take the long walk, you will keep your head up, and you will stay strong, and you will do your time like a warrior, because that is what you are and what you will have to do. You will continue to navigate the Byzantine process of appeals, and of Appellate and Superior and Supreme Courts, and you will exhaust every possible avenue to overturn or reduce your sentence. Maybe it will work and maybe it will not. Someday your time will be up and they will let you out, and then FOR REAL nothing will ever have been so sublime. Unless, of course, you are REALLY in hot water and you are not ever going to get out, in which case you will still remain unbroken. You will continue the struggle, even when everything has been taken from you, and your spirit will still be free.

Either way the frogs will still croak and the buds will still blossom, and people will still love each other, and you. And this cancerous prison that mankind has erected for itself will continue to teeter toward its increasingly imminent collapse, and the sooner the better, I say. We will continue to wage war on that system, and to learn and relearn how to live in harmony with each other and with the earth, because if we do not then we will all surely die. If we do all die then we will return to the earth, and the ashes of our species will decompose in its bosom, and eventually something will grow up out of the compost. One time, in total despair, I looked down and saw two hornets fucking in the dust, and I saw that it was good. In the long run everything really will be all right, and I mean that. Hell, there are folks out there doing bids longer than I really expect to see civilization as we know it last. That's something to think about when you're getting down in the mouth!

Remember: your body will always be a part of the magnificent web of life, of plants and animals inhaling oxygen and carbon dioxide, of birth and death and decomposition. You are in the embrace of an unbroken body of ghosts that reaches back through every place since the dawn of time. We have done everything that we could to combat all that is abusive and cruel. We have endured every manner of suffering and tribulation, and we have never given up the ghost. No matter what you must know that we love you, that we give thanks to you for what you have done, and that your efforts—whatever they have been—have not been in vain.

Harriet Tubman Has a Gun

This month, I don't have much to say. I have a cold and my head is uncooperative. Words come up slowly like bubbles from the bottom of the pond. My writing schedule has gone askew, and my columns fall into disrepair. My mind is a country yard filled with odds and ends lying about in the sun. Cough. I'm not making much sense.

But a few things are stewing inside my head. There is a feeling that I think is important for me to share in these bleak times. Let me try to explain.

The uselessness of doing anything.

History is repeating. War, poverty, genocide and greed are the bones of America. The richest few create money from the blood, sweat and tears of women, children and men around the world. This has been going on for a very, very long time. Since 1492, to be exact.

Even today, the faces of slave owners, the founders of this nation, are celebrated on dollar bills. I think that says a lot.

Often, I despair, after hundreds of years, how can we change any of this? I mean, really? The question always hangs in the air. Are we doomed to live this way? Can we *really* create a better world? Of equality, liberty and opportunity for all?

A great deal of Americans ignore the question all together, convincing them selves that *everything is fine.* And for those who benefit from exploitation, everything *is* fine!

But many other Americans also ignore the question of change. They are trying their best to live their lives, which is hard enough. Just living today is impossible for many people, much less trying to fight for the future.

Others may think that its *useless* to resist what is so large and immovable. *Fuck everything,* we yell, and cry, and have another beer! It is all too much.

Ack. It can be comfortable to think that the system doesn't involve you. That since you can't do anything, you aren't responsible. I can understand that way of thinking. It is easier on the mind. Why drive yourself crazy thinking about dead Iraqi children, or poor kids down the block, or for that matter, the battered woman screaming in the apartment below yours–when it doesn't involve *you*?

But that is no way to live. We are responsible for our lives! We are responsible for each other! There is no choice but to fight–for what each of us was born with, our human rights, our human dignity!

This is the harder path, the one less chosen, that most of you are probably on. Your faces are in the wind.

It can be hard to care about other people in this fucked up world, when everything in this consumer culture screams, "Only care about yourself."

It can be painful to be aware of the suffering of others. Witness how many people pass the homeless woman on the street, not giving her a glance. They act like *she isn't even there.* They think to themselves, *I'm glad I'm not her.*

This is part of an American sickness that denies reality. If a problem isn't *acknowledged,* than it doesn't *exist.* A happy face is put on things, to varnish the surface of deeper troubles. The most popular pop song of the 80s in the US–a time marked by fear of nuclear war, horrendous SOA operations in Central America and "trickle down" economics–simply repeated over and over, "Don't worry, be happy!...Don't worry, be happy!...Don't worry, be happy!" Granted, it was a very catchy tune. Welcome to a *Brave New World.*

Only last week, I was sickened to overhear a woman complain on the bus, "Cambridge needs to get those drunk bums off the benches near the bus stop right by The Gap. They should make the benches with bars so they can't lay down..." But, fair lady, shopping for new clothes (made in sweat shops) at The Gap, where do you expect those "bums" to go? Is out of your precious sight, out of mind? Will for you, the "bums" no longer exist?

So, even *thinking* about the larger troubles of the world, and God forbid, how our government causes and supports exploitation, is un-American. You should Be Proud! (Be Asleep!) Be All You Can Be (a Cog in the Machine)!

For me, the worst part—the fact that drives me to boiling—is that most of the suffering in the world could be so easily prevented. Money could be put where it is needed, instead of in a greedy man's pocket. There are resources enough in the world that *everyone* could have enough to eat, clean water, healthcare, a good life...but the disparity created by extreme wealth and power creates famines, war and epidemics. About 4% of the world's population takes 60% of the world's resources!

Argh. My head hurts. My heart hurts. My soul tries to escape to a better place.

And so given it all, the fucking enormity of everything, what the *fuck* am I supposed to do? We can't even have a non-sexist punk scene. How are we going to have a non-patriarchal society?

In all the peace protests around the world over the last two years, *millions of people* couldn't stop a frat boy from Texas from bombing Iraq. And more wars are yet to come, despite whoever wins the Presidency. I've begun to think, how many wars will I live through? How will we stop *those* wars? It's a little much sometimes, when everything looks so bleak.

This is what I'm pounding at my keyboard, trying to tell you. Let me get to my fuck-

ing point!

When things look the worst, when times are bleak, I gather strength from those who came before. *We are not the only ones who have traveled this path! It would be foolish to think we are alone!*

When I despair at the world, I look back into our collective history, and I begin to smile. I remember the people who came before us, and see them in my minds eye.

This country was built on the genocide of Native Americans, the enslavement of Africans, and the exploitation of workers of all racial and cultural backgrounds. But throughout this bloody history, *there has always been a fight for freedom!*

Watch your back, Major Audry, Harriet Tubman has a gun! I can see her, risking everything, escaping slavery, refusing to be taken alive, and later helping other slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad. Her spirit is very much alive. I remember that even in the darkest times of slavery, slave revolts broke out all through the South.

Harriet Tubman is just one of many people I think of. I remember and appreciate those people who have been resisting tyranny and exploitation, and fighting for freedom, from the very beginning, and down until today. Most, if almost all, are not famous. I don't know their names, but together, they created movements for change. They are my inspiration.

I encourage you–especially those who are feeling the despair that I often feel creeping at my doorstep in these fucked up times–to learn as much of our collective history of resistance as you possibly can. I cannot emphasize this enough. Knowledge is power. It will strengthen you!

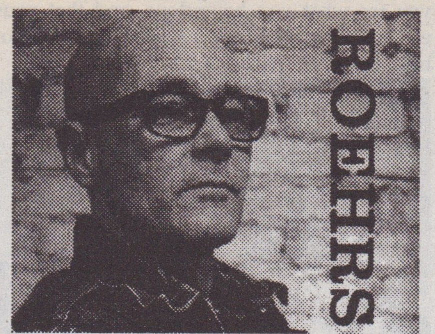
Most people know about Howard Zinn's *The People's History of the United States.* More than any other book, I can't recommend it too highly as a good overview of the history of resistance in America. I just finished reading the massive epic *Roots* and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X,* both written by Alex Haley. I recommend both very highly. I learned so much through those pages. Also, *Living My Life* by Emma Goldman gave a wonderful insight into this famous Anarchist's life and times.

So, go out and find the history that created today. It is *no mistake* that an average American high school history class does not discuss *half* of our story. American history does not begin or end with dead Presidents! Just start with what interests you. Used bookstores often have books much cheaper than new. You are lucky if you have a radical bookstore in your town where you can browse around and pick up books that are hard to find elsewhere. Also, don't forget you can borrow books from friends or go to the library. On the web, check out the amazing AK Press for just about everything. Good reading, and good luck!

Always, always remember this–the struggle continues! Knowledge is power. Learn your history of resistance! You are not alone!

Love, Erika

(www.theprofits.org. Erika Ransom, PO Box 391273, Cambridge, MA 02139. USA)



I DON'T LIKE YOU

Fuckin' A! BRODY'S MILITIA has fucking done it again! These bad human beings from Ohio have blessed you with the *Tribute Through Butchery* EP. Yeah! This is one of the most dangerous seven inches of filth since G.G. Allin left this mortal coil! Feast your eyes on this list of songs and artists, all without any redeeming social value: "Sick of Fuckin Shit" (RUPTURE); "Ugly American" (ANTiSEEN); "Strange Pursuits" (DEVO); "Funeral's Over" (SOCKEYE); "World Up My Ass" (THE CIRCLE JERKS; "D.S.F.A." (ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT); "Alcoholic Survival" (HELLNATION); and "Trashed" (or BLACK SABBATH). Fuck yes! Any record that runs the gamut from ANTiSEEN to RUPTURE is a guaranteed face full of scum-punk! This is brilliant! You can get this steaming chunk of punk nastiness by contacting Brody's Militia, PO Box 377, Mount Orab, Ohio 45154.

The debut EP from San Francisco Bay Area thrashers DESOLATION is out! Grant and his cohorts slash and burn their way through four catastrophic tunes laying waste to your feeble existence. Dan, Will, Billy and Sam team up to hammer spikes into your skull right from the start with "Awake." Check these bleak lyrics: "Chaos rules as the earth lays in ruins / Try to find / Any sign of a life led in peace / Gone as the mark they thought they'd make / Nothings left / Mass genocide has destroyed all human life / The warning signs were there and no one cared / Cause they ignored everything around them / The earth took it's final revenge / The perfect end / And now the world and our lives are no longer ours / I was young when they locked me in the cage / Life is futile when all you know is rage / Humanity has crumbled / As concrete stands still / Reminding the survivors / Of a life that was hell / Concrete blocks of wasted space / Insane asylum walls / The final blasts / Had no time for the weak / When the hunger is hunted / He cannot sleep / And when humanity has crumbled / The whole world will awake." Fucking brutal! DESOLATION crashes right into "No World Order," fuck yes! On the "B" side, DESOLATION crank out two hard-core numbers that have lots of anger—"Evil in Man" and "Pressing On." These guys have assimilated the frantic thrash of Japanese and Swedish hardcore and made it their own. For some of you locals, this will sound startling similar to the demo tape you listened to six months ago—indeed it is the same recording with a superior mix. This is very good! Write to DESOLATION at No Options Records, PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623.

Attention Confederacy of Scum aficionados! Proud To Be An Idiot Records has a treat for you! The HELLSTOMPER / BEFORE I HANG split 45 is a Southern Rock gem! Mr. King, HELLSTOMPER's living rock god of a singer, has the much imitated *Inflammable Material*-era Jake Burns vocal style that combines with Sweet Georgia Brown's guitar playing, in a masterful fashion! HELLSTOMPER initiates the proceedings on this single with a fine tune called "Long Way Back (To Louisiana)," that would make Mr. DAVID ALLEN COE smile. The dream show would team ANTiSEEN, HAMMERLOCK, COCKNOOSE and HELLSTOMPER up for a no-holds-barred scum rock tag-team festival!

BEFORE I HANG's number on this slab is good and gritty! The song "Young, Sweet and Rich" sings the praises of the nubile young girlfriend with lots of cash. The gruff BEFORE I HANG vocals perfectly compliments the searing guitar licks! Order this southern fried scum punk nugget immediately from Proud To Be An Idiot Records, PO Box 410325, San Francisco, CA 94141-0325.

TECHNOCRACY from Osaka City, Japan have a punishing new "Scream and Destroy" punk LP for you. The LP is called *Price of Killing Machine* on Evil Fly Records. This record has shrill screeching vocals with sledgehammer guitar and bass lines backing up the vox. The metal guitars blaze through "Scream & Destroy," "Onslaught for Vengeance," "Tormentor," "Murder Case" and "Crime Life." Then you get the great head-banger finale "Fed Up." Read these lyrics: "Living in vanity / taking it for granted that you are cleverer than me / Defrauding for wealth and honour / I saw through everything you were thinking / we are fed up." Fucking first-rate trash metal for you punks! Contact Technocracy, 3-2-26 Tsukuda, Nishiyodogawa-Ku, Osaka City, 555-0001, Japan, http://cwoweb2.bai.ne.jp/technocracyblood or Evil Fly Records, 3-2-26, Tsukuda, Nishiyodogawa-Ku, Osaka-City, 555-001 Japan.

SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS, from New Jersey, have a fucking brilliant hardcore CDEP for you fucks! The self-titled debut CDEP is on Spook City Records from Philadelphia. This pissed-off burst of bile from SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS will give a fresh infusion of old-school blood to the hardcore scene. SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS start out fucking running hard with "Welcome to New Granada." This song rocks! Fucking fast-paced hard-core with attitude. Read these lyrics to "Welcome to New Grenada": "These lessons learned / Are bridges burned / And all of our steps / Are wrong turns / We're the faded line / Between love and hate / We're all regrets / We're all mistakes too many years / With knives in our backs look at us now stabbing life back / Don't try and stop this / Don't waste your breath / The kids aren't dead / We're just fucking deaf / We're gonna steal back our hearts /" Very

good! SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS surge through "Jump ship," "Untitled," "My Flatline," "105" and end up with "Off The List." This song fucking rocks and the words are meaningful. "This is the last time I watch you turn your back on me / for the first time I've finally got all I need / When everything is said and done / Just keep my name off your fucking tongue / Just fade away and leave me alone / I won't put my faith in anyone / Looks like you lost again / Just another waste of time—don't try to understand the way I live my life / I'm on my own / Here's your bags and there's the door / I've heard this story too many times before / I know how it fucking ends / I'm left counting my real fucking friends / You're dead to me / No regrets." Fuck yes! SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS plays fucking great hardcore for you punks and skins! Order your CD from Spook City Records, PO Box 34891, Philadelphia, PA 19101; www.spookcityusa.com

Those multi-talented skinheads and Chaos punks from France, CHARGE 69, have a first rate new LP for you! The new Knockout Records LP is called *Univers Sale*, and once again, it's a major success story for European punk rock! These songs are so melodic and well crafted—these punks know how to write songs with great melodic hooks that retain their punk urgency! This is another great record from a great band! Write to Knockout Records soon for your copy of *Univers Sale* by CHARGE 69.

The STAGE BOTTLES, the anti-racist skinhead band from Germany, have a top shelf political product for you skins. The new CD on Knockout Records is called *New Flag* and there's some very catchy, up-tempo punk rock numbers on this album! The STAGE BOTTLES start out with "Millions of Stupid People," about "common people starting wars and dropping bombs in the name of god." Song number two is the title track "New Flag" and then you are ushered into song three with trumpets and saxophones. "Real Skinhead" has a message—read the words—"You stupid bastards—wake up and think about where your culture comes from / It's not just having fights, dancing and drinking / Dressing up and owning many records / It's fighting back / You should feel like a suburban rebel / Social difference is the reason employees are still exploited / Fred Perry was a Jew and Levi too / Black music / The movement source / Is kicking out the stupid racists / So let the kids be united / Don't influence the younger ones by telling much without saying anything / Skinhead is not a stupid culture / You're not allowed to switch your brain off / You're singing about a teenage warning / About not showing the white flag / Don't talk about a way of life / Though for you there's no deeper meaning / feeling pride / just posing is no reason to be proud / skinhead is a different thing" Good shit!

The STAGE BOTTLES plow through "That's Where It Comes From"; "Bad Boys" and "Kid's Life" and arrive at "Punk and Disorderly." This is a really good melodic punk song with chugging guitars, superior vocals crushing bass and drums and nice horn accents.

Next we have "PC Idiots." Read the lyrics: "They are talking about a revolution / They need the mass of people / But I've got the impression / For them the mass is just a tool / They can't accept individuals / They can't accept difference in their circle / They can't accept a different childhood / They can't accept proletarian behaviour / They can't accept someone else is right / They can't accept another point of view / They can't accept there's not only one-way / The way they act is wrong, nobody's listening / They're not able to handle difference / No way for a revolutionary base." Excellent!

The STAGE BOTTLES pump through "I'll Calm Down" and they get to "I Wanna Break Out." This is an optimistic song for you happy-go-lucky punks. Next up you get "Kick Out the Parasites," with a good rock n' roll foundation and important words about football. Read "Kick Out the Parasites": "Everyone's talking about money / Achievements in sports are capital / Associations are not independent / Rich clubs are giving out the rules / If you support a small club / The chance for big success is really small / Supporters are just ticket-numbers / Businessmen are the clubs heart / Let's make a fuss / It's a sell out / Over a hundred years ago / City-quarters founded football clubs / Expression of community / A way to find identity / Structures of solidarity / Kick the parasites out!"

Yes! The STAGE BOTTLES exhibit lots of brainpower and manage to wrap the insight and introspection with good melodies. These guys are still plenty pissed off! Read the words to "All You Need Is Hate!" "They see a skinhead walking down the street / The judgment day has come again / If they can feel it, they hate you with fear / But what we feel is real hate / Now we know where it comes from / That we are different / It's our skinhead life / And we know / It was society which made us to what were now / So don't blame me / You never know / When we'll run at you / We are feeling real hate / That makes us feel much better / Oppressing people in other countries / Killing for love / For love of your fucking money / One day we're gonna kill you / You fucking fat cunts, you bastards / In your business suits- fuck off / Grey hair, grey clothes, grey thoughts / Your colours are not ours." Fuck yes! Order your CHARGE 69 *Univers Sales* CD and your STAGE BOTTLES *New Flag* CD from Knock out Records, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany; www.knock-out.de; mosh@knock-out.de.

The SCHUSTER JUNGS from Germany have a really good skinhead CD available for you punks and skins on Bandworm Records. The new CD is entitled *Wir Sind Fertig Fur Die Schlacht* and the songs are quite catchy! As is the case with most German skinhead bands, the politics are quite clear: "Nazi Skins Fuck Off!" You receive fifteen up-tempo melodic Oi! songs sung in German with gruff lead vocals, good harmonies and fine guitar accompaniment. This kind of music forces you to go down to the bar with your pals to have a beer! Every song is consistently well crafted with the vigorous pace kept up throughout the length of the CD. This is a very entertaining CD! For your Schuster Jungs, *Wir Sind Fertig Fur Die Schlacht* CD, contact Bandworm Records at Grosse Diesdorfer Str. 249, D-39108 Magdeburg, Germany, www.bandworm-records.de.

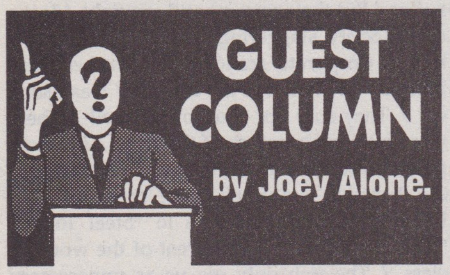
The TRADITIONALS from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania bring you good working class skinhead anthems on their new CD *Dead Society*. The TRADITIONALS have their priorities in order as they sing about the conditions confronting blue-collar families in the USA. The *Dead Society* CD begins with "We Had a Deal" and proceeds right into "Not the Craze." Song number three is *Dead Society*—read the words: "There's skeletons in the train yards / I hear the ghosts, they're in the mills / Lost souls they lurk in empty fields / Impaled by the corporate quills / There's broken homes left shattered dreams / Voices that haunt me through the night / They were dead men left to suffer / But their screams still say fight / Is it a dead society, staggering sobriety / USA's at a loss / Corporate scandals the worker can't handle / We're left to die and rot / Dead society / They sold our soul to the devil / There were millions in search of the river / But now they've drowned and that's our luck." These are heartfelt emotions from the Iron City Bootboys. Read the words to "Steel Town." "This city's built on the sweat of the working class / The rich only see us as unnecessary trash / Our mills built this country/ they protect us in war / they tore down the steel mills, left millions poor / It's so hard to earn a living so hard to get ahead / Is the working class movement dead? / More jobs have been taken/ is anyone around? / They tore our steel mills down / Imported sweat shop steel that definitely played a role / They think they've made it better but the got it all wrong / The working class built this country it's what made us strong / The pride of the city can never go away / There has to be an uprising in this day and age "Good shit!! On this CD THE TRADITIONALS play eleven punk songs plus a cover of MOTORHEAD's "Ace of Spades." THE TRADITIONALS play punk with a good underpinning of rock and roll, like SUBMACHINE, or the DROPKICK MURPHYS. For your copy of THE TRADITIONALS CD *Dead Society*, contact the band at http://members.tripod.com/thetraditionals or Call Craig Bolton for booking at 412-352-3704.

Southern California's SMUT PEDDLERS have a raging punk rock LP out on TKO for you fucks! The new LP (their fifth!) is called *Coming Out*. This is good punk and roll performed by journeyman rockers that have more than paid their dues. This band has an enviable resume. The SMUT PEDDLERS have survived shows with all manner of rock n' roll cretins from THE BODIES to THE STITCHES. They have not only survived shows—they have prevailed! The great combination of full-throated vocals and crunching guitars pushes THE

SMUTT PEDDLERS product over the top. The lyrics on *Coming Out* deal with the myriad of day-to-day situations in So Cal from alcohol to drugs to motorcycles to Acura gangsters. Check out these lyrics to "Exit Plan": "I'm looking for an exit from the land of the lost / Some will break out, some will get tossed / The owner's desire is to garnish my soul / I owe them my life for the stuff that I stole / Exit plan—It's terminal nightmare, I have not a doubt / If you plan to survive, you've gotta find a way out / I need an escape, I'm stuck in a maze / I've got an ominous feeling, I'm approaching the last of my days / Many are caught up in the latest craze / They stand and they stare with a terminal gaze / I can't stop to look through the vistas are stunning / I wanna get out so I gotta keep running / Scoring the floor plan looking for a hole / The big meat grinder is on a roll / Must break out, nowhere to hide / I bought a ticket on a one way ride."

Until next month-

See you fucks at the bar (and don't be late!)



I first heard the news that Reagan had croaked as I sat in the kitchen look'n over the *New York Times*, while the lefty-radio guys were up on the roof installing a thirty-foot tall, 200-watt capacity radio antenna. My friend and her roommates were letting them use her roof for a week so they could set up an antenna to broadcast their pirate radio station to the city during the week long biotech conference that was going on in San Francisco beginning over the weekend, and subsequently drawing activists and opponents of biotechnology from all over the country.

The radio narrator was giving a short biography of Reagan's years in office, his popularity among the American public as "someone to believe in" and his handling of the Cold War. It was the type of biography that would be given on someone as a commemoration of their life after they'd already kicked the bucket. Why the focus on Reagan, I thought. What relevance does this have at noon on a Saturday? Did he croak or something?

An hour later me and Ivy were laughing and parading around town, riding our bikes and screaming "Good riddance! Breathe easy! It's been a long time waiting! Reagan's fuggin' dead!".Some old black guy came up to me and we started talking about track bikes and racing and shit, next thing you know Ivy'd mentioned to him that Reagan had kicked the bucket only four or five hours ago. The old man looked kind of dead pan, unsure of what to say, but then I started laughing, and he started laughing, too, and next thing you know we're high-fiving each other and the guy's got an expression of glee on his face. "Hey fuck that guy, he had it coming to him a long time ago! You know how much damage that asshole did!?" And after we'd all wished each other a happy afternoon, we parted ways, only to see the guy crossing Market Street later on, proclaiming out loud, "Good riddance! Reagan's dead! Fuck his smiling ass, he dead!".

I'm not sure who started it or when it began, but it's long been an expected-tradition among punks that when the two-term president who famously declared "Let them eat jellybeans!" croaks, all present must shotgun a beer, or many beers, for that matter. That in honor of the long-awaited, much anticipated death of one Ronald Reagan, all those who share in the realization of the agony and suffering he caused and the ugliness he represented, must celebrate.

So there we were on Powell and Market, right near the tables of chess guys, right near the Bart plaza where all the thugged-out kids shoot dice and play craps, beer spraying out of punctured beer-cans onto our faces and onto the red brick walk of market street beneath our feet.

Reagan croaking—we all harbored such resentment for him, most of us products of the years in which he presided over America. We remember the era well, along with all the shit it entailed.

Sure he was an easy target to hate. There were a hundred and one songs written about him, there's always been, in my mind, the picture of Jello Biafra in a tight black shirt that simply read "Reagan" with a line through the six letters. Sure, he was a puppet and a crony and an inspiration to some very greedy and twisted people, but aside from that, what was it about him that signified such trouble to so many people? What was it about him that makes the very mention of his name bring up a very sad and scary time in the memory of so many?

I think the thing about him that got over on so many people was the fact that he masked his many misery-inducing acts with a smile, claiming good intentions and righteousness with his mouth while his actions were telling so many people to go get screwed. Sure he may have honestly thought that what he was doing by making so many budget cuts and giving so many tax breaks to the rich was righteous, but the damage he's done is damage that people are still suffering from. He was an actor and as a result the dishonesty that Hollywood instilled in him was inherent and inescapable. He signified a pretty terrifying time in American history, and his smile is one that will live on in my memory as the deluded smile of the ugliness that America came to represent in the eighties, a nation that became so sick and confused and poisonous, a culture that preached such selfishness, a culture which advocated the pursuit of private luxury over the responsibility to society as a whole, and as a result, a culture which preached corrosion for any sense of civility or community. Reagan spelled disasters for America's cities with his many budget cuts. He, like most conservatives, tended to see the world in black and white terms, rather than try to understand the complexities of human behavior. For Reagan there was simply "good" and "evil," no in between. He was foolishly stuck in Norman Rockwell's America, an America of small-towns where everybody knew each other, an America of honesty and civility, an America where strangers talked to each other and strangers were still willing to live together in cities.

But the America he was living in was much, much different from the type of social atmosphere that Rockwell had espoused in his paintings thirty years earlier. Reagan's was an America built on cheap oil and a rotting sense of community, a nation decorated with freeways and littered with automobile suburbs, choking on it's own bad air and fast food. A nation faced with an onslaught of horrible social ills to which it was extremely ill-equipped to deal with, much less understand, and as a result those social ills were instead denounced as "evil" and given jail time and promptly swept under the rug. A nation whose soul was owned and sold by big corporations in a market that revolved around heedless materialism, cheap oil, and the exploitation of the global market. The America that Reagan "fell into" presiding over was not an innocent country still coming-of-age in the manner of Theodore Roosevelt's time. It was a corrupt international bully, gluttonous and obese as hell, so selfish and obsessed with maintaining it's own self-interests through a coercive and brutish foreign policy which touched all corners of the globe that it was inherently blind to the monster it was creating in parties of Islamo-fascists and other victims of our inherently corrupt foreign policy who didn't like us waving our M-16's in their faces, bossing them around.

To me Reagan seemed to represent the ugliness of a nation in denial. Claiming that it was morning in America and giving a toothy grin might have done much to bolster the mood the country was in, but it did nothing to uplift the actual state. Reagan in many ways, signified the inherent tragedy of the modern American condition—an utter sense of denial concerning reality, the sacrifice of community responsibility for the luxuries of private pleasure and wealth, along with a shying-away from all things intellectual that would further our understanding of the human condition, towards a smiling and idiotic consumer fantasy of material wealth and popularity.

Reagan's dead—it's no longer morning in America, and it hasn't been for sixty years. The future ahead looks dark and rife with troubles. The steady supply of cheap oil that has subsidized the obesity, reckless suburban growth and grotesque consumer culture that has rotted our community and civic life from the inside out is slowly running dry. It's going to take a lot more than a neo-conservative's sense of phony optimism, a reliance on the power of the "free market," and a movie star's smile to fix the problems that we're headed towards as a nation. Sure, Reagan may be

dead, but unfortunately his legacy and all the ideas he's responsible for throwing into the American political psyche aren't.

GUEST COLUMN by Mantooth

In the summer a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of mosh – Alfred, Lord Tennyson, circa 1982 outside CBGB's

Behold! The months of moistened brows, musty shows, and sullied travelers sans proper footwear are upon us! I would like to take this opportunity to thank that giant globule of burning hydrogen in the sky and the tilt of the Earth for granting the northern hemisphere thereof this delightful season of mild weather and an inexhaustible supply of foreign touring bands! Yet I must digress. I'll leave the verbose humping of nature to *Slug and Lettuce*.

Since I am not Northern Hemicentric like so many zine columnists, I will not assume that all the readers of *MRR* live in the northern hemisphere of the Earth, or even North America. So for those many miles south of the equator, summer is knocking down our front door and making itself very comfortable. A little *too* comfortable some might say. The other day I asked it to chip in for groceries and the motherfucker just stood there and told me that it doesn't eat any of my food. It then pointed to a moldy bag of bagels it dumpstered from a shop down the street and told me that's what it has been eating. I'll be the first to tell you that's a load of smoldering horseshit. Did my prescription tofu eat itself? That shit is expensive and isn't covered by my insurance company (thank you very much, Mr. President). And don't even get me started on how summer looks and smells like it's been working on a car for the past year without a shower. You know the look. The tint of the color olive and the scent of fermented nutritional yeast. I can't wait until winter rolls through town and summer heads back to its parent's house in Florida.

Anyway, I'm sure most non-posers nowadays are wondering how the fine denizens of Pittsburgh spend their summer vacation. While there is a chance I may not be a prototypical example of how Pittsburghers spend their summer days, I feel like my plans represent the ideals and licentious urges of the Pittsburgh punks pretty honkin' well. So here is how I plan to spend my summer vacation. I hope you enjoy, you miserable wretches.

Time Travel: In case you didn't know, the speed of light is 3 x 10 to the eighth power meters per second. I put this is meters because I'm not a fucking American dullard who insists on sticking with this tired English system of measurements like it were something that is allegorical to something really shitty. Fuck this fucking fucked up system. Anyhow, I don't want to get off track, but the key to time travel is moving at this speed. I hear many of you scoffing, "this science you speak of, Mantooth, is nothing but a pile of halcyon-glazed rubbish! No doubt you are in league with demons and sprites hell-bent on destroying my family's values!" But you are wrong! I plan on destroying hardcore as if the governor of California were sent back in time to blow a bunch of shit up and say things like "your eyes, they are leaking!" See, many of you might not remember, but a lot of bands in the mid to late 80s thought it would be swell idea to fuse hardcore and 70s rock. I used to see copies of SSD *How We Rock* in cut out bins for a few measly spacebucks. I would hold these records up and show them to my friends across the store trying to ignore me and quip about how funny it would be if I actually bought said record. But apparently I'm not so funny, because those wacky hardcore bands are at it again! Supposedly a lot of recent bands have discovered how to propel themselves at this speed and send themselves hurtling back 20 years where they pilfer riffs from AC/DC and Thin Lizzy (because these are the only two bands from the 70s punks are allowed to like) and watering them down in our own present day! Insidious, no? Add some mesh hats, comical, over-sized belt buckles, and a sassy attitude and you have the recipe for Ebay Gold! So move over, Marty McFly, I've got some retro-fusin' to do! Be on the lookout for the debut LP by my hardcore/punk/rock band Raw Powerage *Hemorrhoid Cage Match.* on Shittiest Bl'ast Record Records this summer!

Complain About MRR: This might seem pretty simple, but when I whine about 'zines, I try to make things as complicated as possible. Since I'm already punk as fuck, I'm gonna head to the internet and let it know that *MRR* doesn't cover enough punk and hardcore. There's too much garage rock coverage. And that negative review of a record I really like inadvertently killed my entire family and subsequently gave me cancer. The doctors say my only chance for survival is to burn all my punk records and paraphernalia. Then he gave me a prescription for some tight ass pants, youth small t-shirts, engineer hats, and a lot of boring music that I guess is called "indie" or something. I don't know; his handwriting is horrible. You know doctors! Anyhow, all this shit is extremely overpriced, so I can't afford to go to any shows this summer. Instead, I'll sit on the internet and complain to message boards that *MRR* covers too much punk and hardcore.

Not Go to Philly: This place seriously sucks. Sure, there is pizza and Turkey Hill iced tea, but you also have to deal with a bunch of lummoxes in engineer hats and pisspoor record stores.

Well, that's really all I have planned. Sure there is only three things on my list, but they are all pretty labor intensive. Plus, now that every band on Earth has decided to tour, I don't have a lot of time to do anything else. In the meantime, try to stay cool and if you travel back in time make sure not to make out with your mom no matter how much you want to. You might end up fathering yourself, creating a paradox that will destroy the universe, and thus destroying any chances I have of scoring original copies of any of the Electric Deads EPs. And don't think condoms will help you. They might protect against babies, but they don't protect the heart.

Another wasteD NIGHT with MIKE THORN

Okay, okay—yes we now have a UPC code printed on the front cover and yes I'm not very happy about it but before you fire off nasty letter after nasty email filled with talk of fire and brimstone, Iron Maiden quotes, and misguided talk of the "mark of the beast" let me say a little something first.

So here's the deal, for years upon years *Maximum Rocknroll* has been and still is distributed through Desert Moon. Many years ago, one Tim Yo worked out a sweet deal with Desert Moon where they would sticker *MRR*'s with barcodes for free that they would then ship to places like Borders and other chain shops. This went on for years, until last month when Borders declared they would no longer be utilizing Desert Moon as a vendor, and if we still would like to be sold through Borders (in addition to countless other shops) we'd have to start using this new distributor, Ingram. Unlike Desert Moon, Ingram is not willing to sticker the barcodes for free, but are more than willing place stickers on them to the tune of 50 cents per zine. When we worked it out we'd be spending at least $800 a month to do this, if not more in the future. There was also the option of paying $150 to print stickers and then spend several hours each month stickering them ourselves—but then what if the number of zines requiring stickering increased? What would be the limit to the number we could do each month, and what was the limit to the number of months we could get a sizable number of people to do the stickering? Plus, why were we going to sticker? To hide from people the fact that we had a UPC code? Moreover why are we paying (be it in hours or actual dollars) not to print one? Sure they are gross, especially aesthetically speaking, but in the end it's nothing more than an easy way for distributors and stores to keep track of the price of and the number of copies sold.

I'm keenly aware of the arguments against barcodes—discussions of their symbolism regarding the commodification of art and culture do not fall on deaf ears—however I don't think that is the *real* discussion that needs to be had. To me, what we need to be talking about is larger than that, and that amounts to; should *Maximum* be in chain shops to begin with? It is an argument we've had over and over within the halls of *MRR* house, and in the

end the answer for us has come down to that we're okay with it, based out of the logic that not every town has a cool independent record, zine, or punk shop. Some places in the USA, the only place where publications like *MRR* are available is Borders or Tower, as totally out of wack as that sounds, it's also totally true. So given that reality, I'd much rather some young punk walk into said store and pick up a copy of *MRR* and learn about the punk scene that way, than whatever mixed up, wacked out version of it is being pushed in the mainstream these days.

So it comes down to this, *MRR* is sold in chain shops, and we feel okay with that, but in order to continue to sell in those places our hand is forced at this moment to print a barcode. Of course, it goes without saying that we would much rather you buy *MRR* from your local independent record shop, bookstore, zine distributor or kid that sells zines at shows. Hell, you could even start distributing it yourself, five copies for $10. You can start writing your hate mail now.

"Fuck, Shit, I Hate Reagan."
—Pagan Faith

In case you didn't pick up on it, this edition of *Maximum Rocknroll* is our special send off to the great communicator, the bumbling actor who would be king, the murderous son of a bitch known as Ronald Reagan. It has been stated that perhaps there isn't much point in doing something so focused on the Gipper in 2004. Honestly, I did question the point a few times. I mean, hasn't punk progressed beyond Ronnie at this point? I mean the man probably hadn't been able to wipe his own ass in nearly a decade, and he passed out of this world enshrouded in blissful ignorance of the horror he inflicted upon this world thanks to the debilitating Alzheimer's that ravaged his mind. I mean, its possible that when all is said and done, and the historical record is looked back upon in ten, twenty years from now that Bush the younger may in fact be responsible for mountains more damage to humanity and this planet than Bonzo's former co-star. Wouldn't our rage, our energies, and the precious gallons of ink that will cover this zine with be better spent discussing George "Chimpanzee Boy" Bush's malicious assaults on humanity? Perhaps.

But here's the thing, Reagan died, and with him so did, seemingly, the knowledge of what a totally scum-sucking, sack of human garbage he was. A man with a twisted sense of reality who believed that it was possible to win a nuclear war (its not, in case you were wondering), a man hell bent on destroying the environment, a man responsible (through his support of vicious dictators) for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, a man responsible for the homeless problem in this country, a man responsible for the USA's hard swing to the right.

And just look at what total fucking spineless morons so much of the "left" in this country is—with Kerry, the great white "holy-shit - anybody-but-Bush" candidate talking about what a great leader Reagan was, what a fucking jackass. If he had a fucking spine, if anyone had a fucking spine, they would have mentioned that while its sad that he died, and that they feel sorry for his family but that his death doesn't even come close to making amends for the tens of thousands killed in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua as a result of Reagan's foreign policy. One which looked fondly on undemocratically elected, brutal, right-wing regimes and gleefully trained death squads. They would mention that his death doesn't even come close to making amends for the thousands of Americans driven into poverty and homelessness as a result of "Reaganomics (...killing you, killing me)." Instead there was a state funeral, and mountains of forced pity. That his demise doesn't even come close to making up for his total refusal to recognize the AIDS crisis, and the deaths that said refusal caused.

And that is why we did this issue, to keep that history from being forgotten. Because it can't and shouldn't be forgotten. Well that, and the fact that I was so ecstatic when I heard about him being dead that I almost got drunk for the first time in eleven years. So in memory of the Gipper, we present this issue. As Suicidal Tendencies stated on their first (and only good) record "Rot in heaven, because you're forgiven in hell..." I've never been totally sure what that means but I like the way it sounds. Oh yeah, Meese is still a pig, and free John Hinkley!

Endnotes:

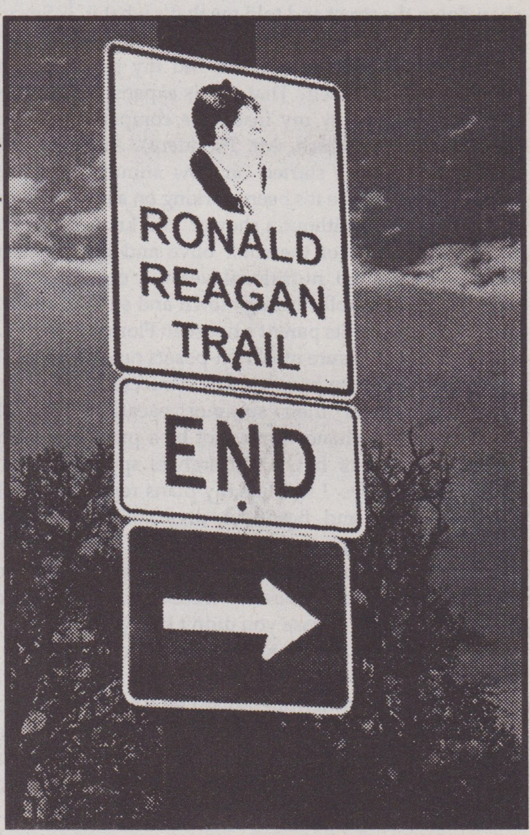
1) Remember a few months back when I said I would probably end up voting for Kerry, just cause I wanted Bush out of office so bad? Nevermind. Please scratch that from the record.

2) Man the new Autonomia CD is fucking great! So are all the new Chicago hardcore records I've gotten lately—I Attack, Non-Fiktion Nois and No Slogan.

3) Send me postcards and compromising pictures of yourself c/o the *MRR* PO Box or send me emails that I'll take forever to respond to and then you'll corner me about in a restaurant in Santa Cruz, and I'll just stand there with the confused look of a deer caught in the headlights of a Mac truck. Oh yeah, my email is mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com

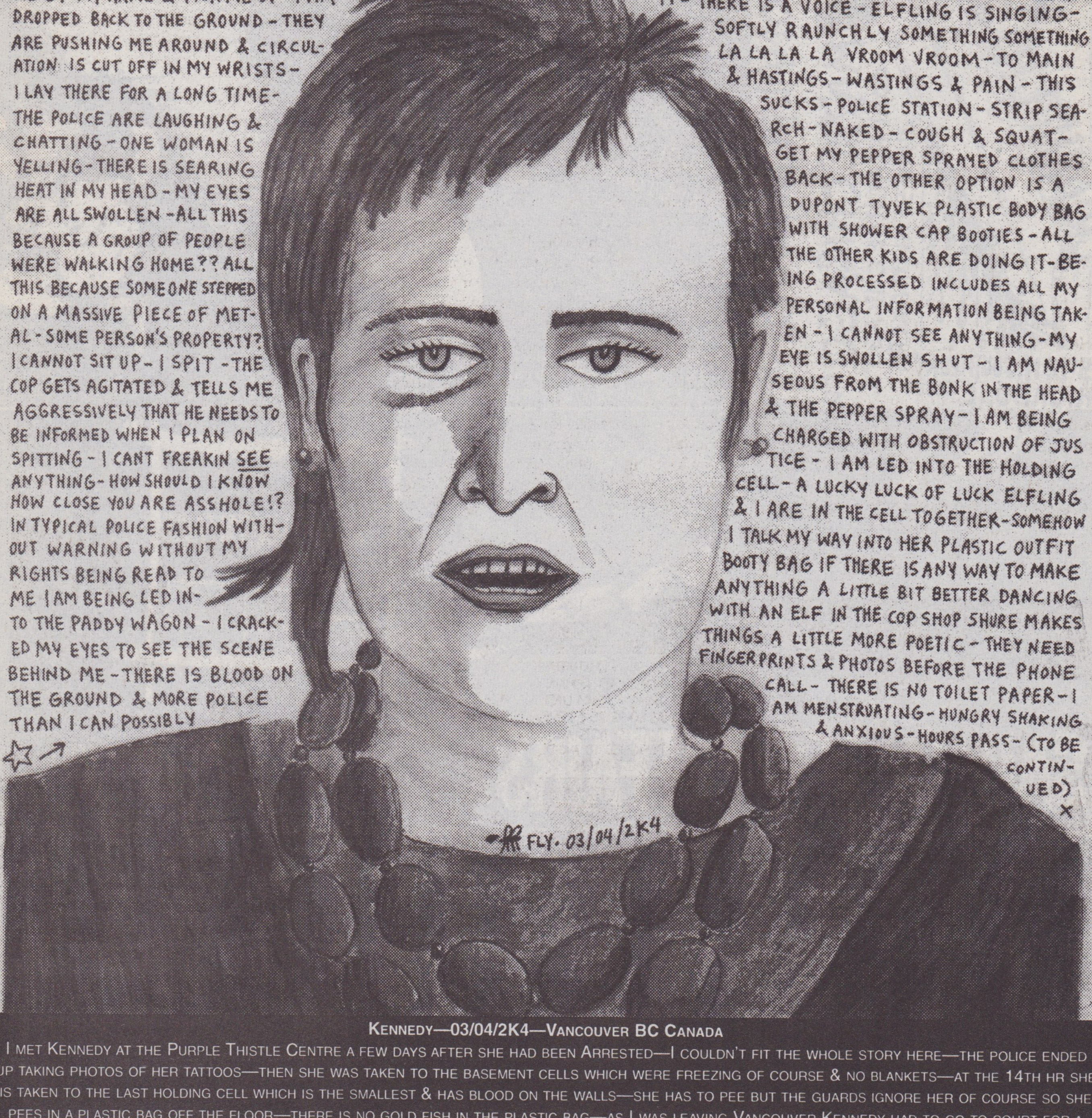
6-10-04-C

photo by Karoline Collins



ONCE UPON A TIME THIS GREAT AUNT OF MINE CLIMBED UP A MOUNTAIN TO A MONASTERY IN BURMA - SHE SEDUCED A MONK ENTICED HIM TO GIVE HER THE MEANING TO LIFE & HIS ORGANIC ANAL BEADS! THEY HAD 3 DAYS OF PASSIONATE LOVE MAKING & SHE HIKED IT BACK DOWN THE MOUNTAIN - WHEN I GOT OUT OF JAIL SHE GAVE ME THE BEADS - WHY I WENT TO JAIL FOR A JOYFUL GAG 20 HRS BOOHOO - THE GRRLS GOT SEXY SEXIED FISH NETTED UP - I WAS ENTICED TO WEAR A PRINCESS DRESS OVER MY CARGOS - THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A SIGN - LEFT THE SHOW - THERE WAS A LIMO ACROSS THE STREET - OUR LIFT HOME - YEAH RIGHT - ELFLING DOES A QUICK JUMP UP & JUMPS OFF THE VEHICLE - DEEK INTO THE ALLEY TO TAKE A LEAK - I TURN TO SEE A POLICE CAR PULL UP BEHIND EVERY ONE & THE LIMO PULLS UP BEHIND - A LOT OF YELLING - HEAD BACK TO THE STREET - ONE WOMAN IS FACE DOWN ON THE HOOD OF THE CAR WITH 2 POLICE OFFICERS ON HER - ANOTHER WOMAN IS ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CHARGES & IS ON THE GROUND WITH 3 COPS - ONE MAN IS ON THE FENCE WITH A PEPPERSPRAYED FACE - THERE IS A TON OF COPPS - PEPPER SPRAY - NO COHERENT COMMUNICATION - SHIT GOES DOWN FAST - MY FRIEND IS ON THE GROUND WITH A POLICE OFFICER BEATING ON HER LEGS - IT IS FEROCIOUS & BRUTAL - SHE IS WEARING COWBOY BOOTS & CRINOLINE BARELY COVERING HER ASS - I MOVE TOWARDS HER TO GET THE COP OFF HER - I AM GRABBED FROM BEHIND BY 2 POLICE OFFICERS - PUSHED YELLED AT & TOLD TO "GET AWAY!" & AM PEPPER SPRAYED DIRECTLY IN MY EYES - I AM ON THE GROUND BLINDED & BLACKING OUT FROM THE PAIN - BRUTALIZED - THE POLICE OFFICER KICKS MY SIDE & TELLS ME NOT TO MOVE - THEY WRENCH ME BY MY ARMS & PICK ME UP - I AM DROPPED BACK TO THE GROUND - THEY ARE PUSHING ME AROUND & CIRCULATION IS CUT OFF IN MY WRISTS - I LAY THERE FOR A LONG TIME - THE POLICE ARE LAUGHING & CHATTING - ONE WOMAN IS YELLING - THERE IS SEARING HEAT IN MY HEAD - MY EYES ARE ALL SWOLLEN - ALL THIS BECAUSE A GROUP OF PEOPLE WERE WALKING HOME?? ALL THIS BECAUSE SOMEONE STEPPED ON A MASSIVE PIECE OF METAL - SOME PERSON'S PROPERTY? I CANNOT SIT UP - I SPIT - THE COP GETS AGITATED & TELLS ME AGGRESSIVELY THAT HE NEEDS TO BE INFORMED WHEN I PLAN ON SPITTING - I CANT FREAKIN SEE ANYTHING - HOW SHOULD I KNOW HOW CLOSE YOU ARE ASSHOLE!? IN TYPICAL POLICE FASHION WITHOUT WARNING WITHOUT MY RIGHTS BEING READ TO ME I AM BEING LED INTO THE PADDY WAGON - I CRACKED MY EYES TO SEE THE SCENE BEHIND ME - THERE IS BLOOD ON THE GROUND & MORE POLICE THAN I CAN POSSIBLY ☆↗

☆ - COUNT - THE WAGON ALREADY HAS PEOPLE IN IT - THERE IS A VOICE - ELFLING IS SINGING - SOFTLY RAUNCHLY SOMETHING SOMETHING LA LA LA VROOM VROOM - TO MAIN & HASTINGS - WASTINGS & PAIN - THIS SUCKS - POLICE STATION - STRIP SEARCH - NAKED - COUGH & SQUAT - GET MY PEPPER SPRAYED CLOTHES BACK - THE OTHER OPTION IS A DUPONT TYVEK PLASTIC BODY BAG WITH SHOWER CAP BOOTIES - ALL THE OTHER KIDS ARE DOING IT - BEING PROCESSED INCLUDES ALL MY PERSONAL INFORMATION BEING TAKEN - I CANNOT SEE ANYTHING - MY EYE IS SWOLLEN SHUT - I AM NAUSEOUS FROM THE BONK IN THE HEAD & THE PEPPER SPRAY - I AM BEING CHARGED WITH OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE - I AM LED INTO THE HOLDING CELL - A LUCKY LUCK OF LUCK ELFLING & I ARE IN THE CELL TOGETHER - SOMEHOW I TALK MY WAY INTO HER PLASTIC OUTFIT BOOTY BAG IF THERE IS ANY WAY TO MAKE ANYTHING A LITTLE BIT BETTER DANCING WITH AN ELF IN THE COP SHOP SHURE MAKES THINGS A LITTLE MORE POETIC - THEY NEED FINGERPRINTS & PHOTOS BEFORE THE PHONE CALL - THERE IS NO TOILET PAPER - I AM MENSTRUATING - HUNGRY SHAKING & ANXIOUS - HOURS PASS - (TO BE CONTINUED) ×



KENNEDY—03/04/2K4—VANCOUVER BC CANADA

I MET KENNEDY AT THE PURPLE THISTLE CENTRE A FEW DAYS AFTER SHE HAD BEEN ARRESTED—I COULDN'T FIT THE WHOLE STORY HERE—THE POLICE ENDED UP TAKING PHOTOS OF HER TATTOOS—THEN SHE WAS TAKEN TO THE BASEMENT CELLS WHICH WERE FREEZING OF COURSE & NO BLANKETS—AT THE 14TH HR SHE IS TAKEN TO THE LAST HOLDING CELL WHICH IS THE SMALLEST & HAS BLOOD ON THE WALLS—SHE HAS TO PEE BUT THE GUARDS IGNORE HER OF COURSE SO SHE PEES IN A PLASTIC BAG OFF THE FLOOR—THERE IS NO GOLD FISH IN THE PLASTIC BAG—AS I WAS LEAVING VANCOUVER KENNEDY HAD TO GO TO COURT FOR A PRELIMINARY HEARING ABOUT THIS INCIDENT—THEY HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED A DATE FOR A HEARING—CONTACT KENNEDY: BAREFOOT@EARTHDOME.COM

CONTACT FLY: FLY@BWAY.NET OR WWW.BWAY.NET/~FLY

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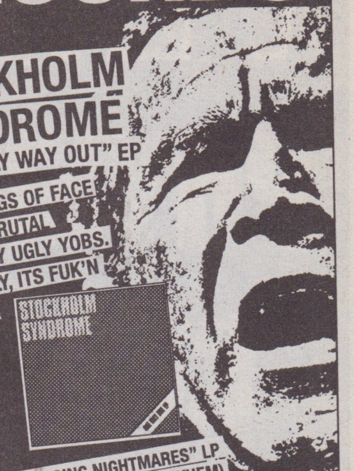

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MRR NEWS

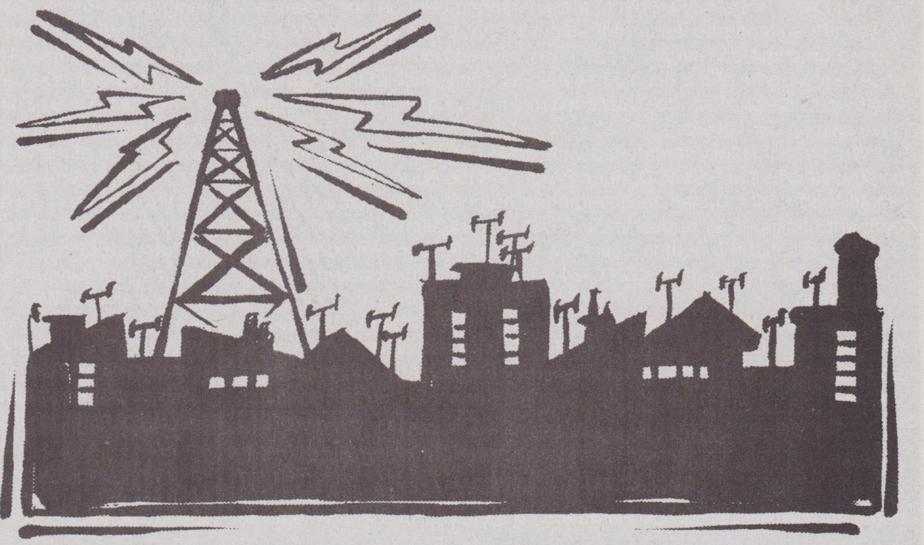
COURT REVERSES FCC MEDIA OWNERSHIP RULES

AP

A federal appeals court on June 25th largely reversed a landmark set of rule changes from the Federal Communications Commission that would have allowed companies to own more radio and television stations in the same market.

The decision marked a major setback to the FCC's efforts to deregulate media ownership rules and a victory for public interest groups that had opposed the measures.

The rule changes have been the subject of much debate about the concentration of media ownership ever since they were announced in June 2003. The plaintiffs against the FCC said the rules would limit the diversity of voices on the airwaves, while the FCC said the old rules had become outdated.



In the decision, the judges threw out rules that would have allowed greater ownership of television and radio stations in the same market. However, they also found that the FCC was within its rights to repeal a blanket prohibition on companies owning both a newspaper and a television station in the same city.

"This is a big, big win for diversity," said Andrew Jay Schwartzman, CEO of the Media Access Project, a Washington, D.C.-based public interest law firm that led the lawsuit against the FCC.

Schwartzman said he was disappointed that the court did not reverse the FCC's move to repeal the ban on cross-ownership of newspapers and TV stations in the same city, but he noted that the court asked the FCC to reconsider the decision in light of Thursday's ruling.

FCC chairman Michael Powell called the court's decision "deeply troubling."

But consumer advocates and other opponents of the FCC's efforts to deregulate media ownership were quick to hail the court's decision. Gene Kimmelman, senior public policy director for Consumers Union, one of the plaintiffs, called the ruling "a complete repudiation of rules that would allow one or two media giants to dominate the most important sources of local news and information in almost every community in America."

The court's ruling does not affect a separate issue of national limits on broadcast ownership. Last year the FCC raised the limits on the size of the national audience that can be reached by a single owner of TV stations from 35 percent to 45 percent, but Congress later passed a law that put in place a cap of 39 percent.

Teenage Riot in Tennessee!

Compiled from news reports

Dyersburg, TN was without police protection for more than an hour as every available officer was called to quell the riot at the Teen Xtreme nightclub on the night of June 19.

Officers reported the crowd refused orders to disperse and several individuals began to assault the officers, interfering with the arrest of the instigators.

"It took every officer working in the city, members of the department's Special Response Team and five sheriff's deputies to regain control of the situation," said Williamson. "We had to call out six officers in addition to the officers working the streets."

The incident placed "the rest of the city in a vulnerable position," said Williamson.

In the end, three police officers went to the hospital; the worst injury appears to be a broken ankle. Several teens went to the hospital as well with injuries ranging from burning eyes and lungs to possible broken bones. Dyersburg police say a through investigation as to exactly what happened will begin immediately.

There was no word on whether locals learned of the situation in time to take advantage of the absence of policing citywide.

'MANIFEST DESTINY' ALIVE AND WELL

MOHAWK WOMEN MEET WITH UN

MNN Mohawk Nation News

Three Mohawk women from Kanehsatake addressed the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues this week in New York about the current dispute in their community. Tewatonhawitha, Warisose and Wenhniseri:iosta of the traditional government spoke to the Forum on Tuesday morning, May 17th.

Their message was plain and simple. They brought greetings from their men, women and children of the Mohawk Nation at Kanehsatake, "which lies within the colonial boundaries of Canada." They described the Canada/Quebec policing agreement, which was being forced on their community.

To quote—"These agreements are an infringement on our sovereignty. We are suffering because of the conflict that these agreements have caused amongst our people. They have caused nothing but anger and uncertainty. Some of our people have even been banished from our territory by outside white courts. They can't make a living and the court orders have split up our families.

"We are constantly threatened with armed police invasions into our communities by the RCMP, Quebec Police and the Aboriginal police force established under Canadian government authority. The Canadian government continues to refuse to deal with our traditional government. It does not respect our right to make our laws under our own constitution, the Kaienerekowa. Canada's Bill C-24 is designed to turn our territory into a Canadian municipality. It is meant to destroy our ancestral rights and use of our land. We never agreed to become part of Canada. We have no representation in Canada's parliament. We are not even being consulted about any of these moves. Canada knows we would never consent to its outrageous proposals that violate our human rights under international laws.

"The Canadian government has used referendums to force its legislation on us. Our traditional method of reaching consensus avoids conflict and confrontation. The Canadian procedures imposed on us are adversarial and divisive. Over half the voters on their electoral list live outside our community.

"Mediation established with the consent of all parties involved is the only process that will diffuse the tension. Force of arms and threats will not bring peace. The United Nations stands for finding peaceful resolutions to disputes. It must intervene immediately to bring peace to our community."

Canada's response to this message was to walk out of that meeting.

The reaction from the UN was swift. In late May, two members of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights arrived from Switzerland at the Longhouse in Kahnawake. Rodolfo Stavenhagen, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples, along with Pablo Espiniella, a Human Rights Officer, took bundles of written information from the Kanehsatake and Kahnawake people. This will be used to make a report to the UN about the human rights situation of indigenous peoples in Canada.

Kenneth Deer, Editor of the Eastern Door, presented the UN representatives with documents on the sovereignty position of the traditional government of the Mohawk people. He said, "We have our own constitution, the Kaienerekowa, which we follow. Our responsibilities are carried out through the clans and we are a matriarchal society. Our way precedes European contact. We never gave up our sovereignty to become citizens of France, England or Canada. Although we are next to Montreal we have not lost our language, culture, identity or way of life. Canada tried to destroy all this. We have a staunch sense of our nationality. When there is a breach of our fundamental rights, we react. Canada does not want to recognize us as a nation. In 1923 Deskahe went to the League of Nations to make an application for our Confederacy to become a member of the League. The RCMP invaded the Longhouse at Six Nations and locked out the chiefs and installed the colonial elected council. The Indian Act was imposed on us to continue the destruction of our rights. Less than 20% of people vote in the colonial imposed elections on our territories. Some of us travel on our own passports. Canada has grown rich on the backs of the Indigenous Peoples."

MAORI LAND CONFISCATION CONTINUES

Aotearoa Indymedia

The Government recently introduced a bill that takes away legal and beneficial ownership of the foreshore and seabed from Maori, indigenous peoples of New Zealand, and gives it to the Crown. Maori Iwi and Hapu may be awarded 'customary rights' and 'ancestral connection' to foreshores and seabeds, but they have to go through court proceedings to get it. It is also unclear what 'customary rights' and 'ancestral connection' actually gives Maori. It does not include a right to development. Furthermore, if 'customary rights' is awarded to an iwi or hapu, the Crown retains the right to extinguish it.

The bill is clearly in contravention of the Treaty of Waitangi, which "...guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand and to the respective families and individuals thereof, the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates, Forest, Fisheries, and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess, so long as it is their wish and desire to maintain the same in their possession...."

Reaction to the bill has been swift: Peace Movement Aotearoa, Treaty Tribes Coalition, and Te Ope Mana a Tai are among groups to denounce the Government's the policy;

"The only thing that's 100% clear is that the policy is intended to expropriate Maori property rights", said Matiu Rei, Te Ope Mana a Tai Chairman. "The Bill will clearly vest full legal and beneficial ownership in the Crown. In order to do that, it has to take that ownership off someone else, and the someone else is the Whanau, Hapu and Iwi who hold it currently."

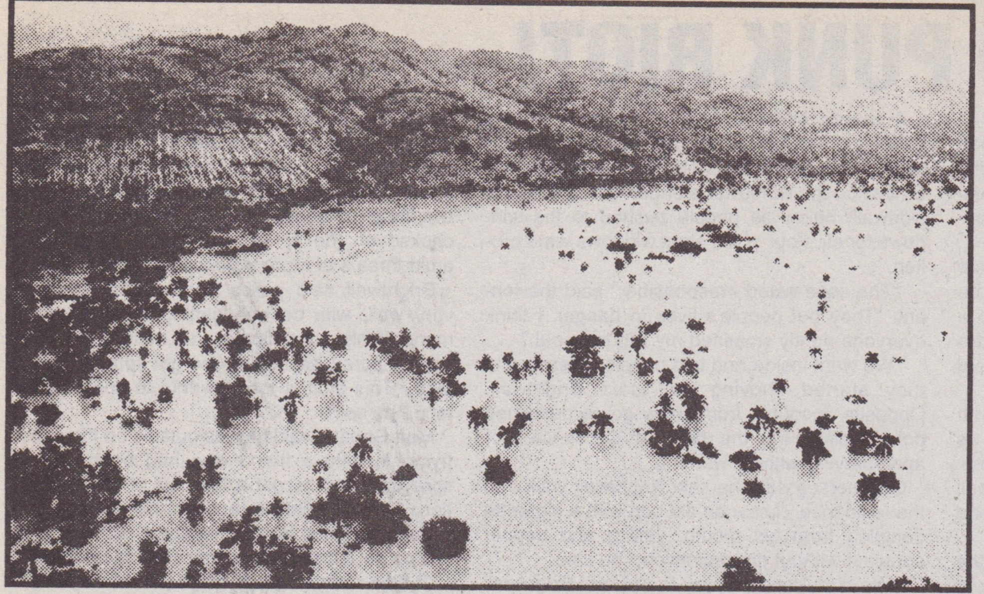
GUADALAJARA

indymedia

The Third Summit of Governments and Heads of State of Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union (ALCUE III) concluded at the end of May with a smooth and indirect condemnation of the American military torture in Iraq, trade agreements without popular endorsement, violence against demonstrators at the end of the general march and around 100 detained and disappeared. Thirty people had been hurt during the previous night, which was passed in a tense atmosphere.

Several demonstrators were released. Nonetheless scores were still imprisoned weeks after the events. At a press conference, rumors were confirmed concerning the torture and humiliation of the prisoners, descriptions of beatings along the way, insults, etc. Upon arrival the men were separated from the women. At least one of the male prisoners suffered electric shocks to the testicles. The women were made to strip completely and were forced into strange positions. They were detained for more than three hours on the ground with their arms on their necks while being kicked and jumped upon. From the inside some of the prisoners overheard someone saying that the foreigners should be released as quickly as possible so as to not create problems with the embassies.

Of the wounded, it is known that two had ruptured intestines and head lesions.



FLOODING IN HAITI

By Anandi

Flooding in Haiti in late May is thought to have killed as many as 1,000 people. Most heavily affected were remote towns in the Southeastern part of the country. The Dominican Republic—which shares an island with Haiti—was also affected, but to a much lesser degree. The reason for this is that while the rains could have happened anywhere, it was the widespread deforestation in Haiti that led to the devastating flooding.

The deforestation of the country was the result of World Bank/IMF policies to which the Aristide administration, with the support of the majority of the Haitian people, objected. Aristide felt that international privatization policies were harmful to the people of Haiti. It has been alleged by many that his feelings on these matters led to his removal from office, and the country, by US troops recently.

The country is now in the hands of US and international peace keeping forces, who are attempting to organize aid delegations, but it is feared that the scope of the disaster will prevent them from saving many who may yet die from disease and lack of food and clean water due to the floods.

"DR. CHAOS" SENTENCED

New York Times

A Wisconsin man who hid cyanide in a Chicago subway was sentenced to 21 years in prison for conspiring to knock out power lines, burn buildings, and damage computers. The man, Joseph Konopka, who calls himself "Dr. Chaos," was the self appointed leader of a group called the Realm of Chaos, which recruited youths to engage in property damage. The authorities say the group's actions affected more than 30,000 power customers and caused more than $800,000 in damage.

DAY AFTER TOMORROW LOOKING BAD

Excerpeted from Earthweek

A chief United Nations climate official warned that despite efforts to reduce greenhouse gasses around the world, the climate altering pollution has begun to increase at "an alarmingly rapid" rate. Joke Waller-Hunter, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, referred to measurements made by US scientists. "Recent news abut a disintegrating Artic ice cap and the increased frequency of extreme weather events...have added to the sense of urgency" about climate change, she warned.

DELICATE RAGE

By Richard Hell

Rock-and-roll cognoscenti and Robert Quine's friends were angry and torn up last week to hear that on Saturday, June 5, his body had been discovered in his loft on Grand Street, a suicide. Quine never injected drugs, but this was an injection and one containing way too many bags of heroin to have been accidental. By his own avowal, he'd survived a similar try this past winter. He didn't want to live after the completely unexpected death by heart attack of his wife, Alice, last August. They'd been together since the mid-seventies.

I won't presume to try to analyze the factors contributing to his ceaseless, abysmal despair of recent months, but he'd never been exactly a cheerful person, though he was always one who had something really funny to say. In fact, if you're not crying, it's hard to think of him without smiling. Or possibly you could do both at once. Then again, he also had a talent for provoking anger, and he was an angry person himself. It contributed to his magnificent guitar playing.

Like Miles Davis and Lou Reed—probably the two instrumentalists he most admired—Quine brought new ways of playing to improvised music. Quine had many influences, and he loved perpetuating them (all of his friends have compilation tapes made for them from his gigantic record collection), but anyone who cares can recognize one of his solos immediately, and even those who don't care are likely to perk up when exposed to what he'd wring from a guitar for the 20 or 30 seconds of one of his perfectly structured but outrageously wild expositions in the middle of a song by Reed or me (or Tom Waits, Lloyd Cole, Matthew Sweet, or John Zorn). His command of technique came from endless hours of studying the records that moved him—but it was the combination of rage and delicacy, and the pure monstrosity of invention, that set him apart.

Quine grew up in a fairly privileged family in Akron, Ohio. His uncle was the Harvard philosopher W. V. Quine. Bob himself had passed the bar in Missouri, though he never practiced law. He also attended the Berklee School of music. Part of his legend was that, though a member of one of the first "punk" bands, the Voidoids, in 1976, he was already 33 when the band began, and he dressed like an office clerk in jeans, innocuous sport coat, and open-collared button-down shirt. Underneath, though, was the connoisseur of moronic rapture who thrived on such material as the Blue Echoes' "Cool Guitar," Ronnie Speeks and the Elrods doing "What Is Your Technique," Al Sweat's "I Hate Myself," Jimmy Copeland's "Satellite Rock," and Floyd Mack's "I Like to Go."

He was still playing guitar for hours every day, alone, up to the end. All his friends wanted to help and called him often and got him out to eat, but he couldn't stop crying. He would tell you how he'd gotten the crying down to two hours a day from four. He was still almost always funny, though. Ivan Julian, who played with us in the Voidoids, told me about a wisecrack Quine made when they went out to eat recently. When the check came, Ivan reached for it, but Bob snatched it away, snarling, "No, I got it. It's my way of saying good-bye."

RICHMOND PUNK RIOT!

indymedia

Richmond's police force reared its brutal head on the punk community early Sunday morning as officers arrived at a show downtown and indiscriminately sprayed large amounts of pepper spray directly and indirectly on people.

More than one hundred people gathered late the night of Sat, May 29, in an apartment on Second and Main streets to say farewell to a friend and for the performances of VCR and a one-time only appearance from a Minor Threat cover band called Minor Treat.

The second floor residence was packed with people sweating and dancing to Minor Treat as five cops arrived at the scene at 12:32 am. Richmond police lieutenant Leonard Brightwell said he responded to complaints of noise and disorderly conduct outside of the residence.

The tenant of the apartment was notified of the police presence and attempted to tell the crowd that police were outside. "(The police) told me I had five minutes to clear people out; I tried but it was pretty impossible," she said.

When the tenant went outside to tell police she could not remove people from her apartment, the cops moved inside to the apartment. As the band was still playing, the police began shooting pepper spray at the crowd. Blinded by the pepper spray, people began fleeing to the apartment's only exit and breaking out apartment windows in order to breath.

A chaotic situation ensued as some people jumped out windows to two stories below to escape the vapor and violence from the police. Bottles on the windowsills began falling onto the sidewalk below as people pushed to the windows for air. Four of the eight windows were broken.

"The cops acted irresponsibly," said the tenant. "They put people's lives in danger. I think everyone rightly smashed my windows out."

"We went inside and told people to leave and they started shoving us," said Brightwell. Opposite accounts from show goers described police walking into the middle of the dance floor and spraying without warning.

One person said he saw Brightwell walk into the residence. "I saw an old cop with a cigarette dangling from his mouth, yelling and pepper spraying without discrimination," he said.

"We shot pepper spray in the air," Brightwell said. "I got the same dose everyone got."

Angered by their treatment, show goers began throwing bottles from the apartment at the growing number of police below. More than a hundred people milled about outside, confronting police and refusing to leave. Police detained individuals and threatened with arrest those attempting to gather badge numbers and monitor the situation.

"(The police) went into the apartment and insinuated a riot," said Drew Ziverman. "If you spray people (with pepper spray) in the face, people will start throwing bottles."

The spraying continued outside as more than a dozen police cruisers, several motorcycles and two state troopers arrived on the scene. People choked on the spray and attempted to leave amid threats of more violence from the police.

Brightwell said police handled the situation very well, with no one getting hurt. He commended his subordinates on their use of the pepper spray, saying no one got sprayed in the face. "This stuff is too powerful to spray in the face," he said.

Matt Garland said he was outside on the street trying to help a friend who had been pepper sprayed when he got a face full of the concoction. Garland said he received no warning and was approached from behind by a cop who shot him on his left side with spray in his face and ear.

"I was sprayed pretty much point-blank in the face with some orange pepper spray," Garland said. "A friend of mine said he could see the spray dripping down my shirt."

Four people were arrested and released Sunday morning. One person who was not at the party but leaving from nearby Third Street Diner was arrested. Another person said she was arrested after a cop walking in front of her tripped, turned around and grabbed her. Those arrested received charges of disorderly conduct and obstruction of justice.

BUSH=IL DUCE, SAYS FEDERAL JUDGE

excerpted from an article in the New York Sun

A prominent federal judge has told a conference of lawyers that President Bush's rise to power was similar to the accession of dictators such as Mussolini and Hitler.

"In a way that occurred before but is rare in the United States...somebody came to power as a result of the illegitimate acts of a legitimate institution that had the right to put somebody in power. That is what the Supreme Court did in Bush versus Gore," said Guido Calabresi, a judge on the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals, which sits in Manhattan.

"The reason I emphasize that is because that is exactly what happened when Mussolini was put in by the king of Italy," Judge Calabresi continued, as the allusion drew audible gasps from some in the luncheon crowd Saturday at the annual convention of the American Constitution Society.

Judge Calabresi, a former dean of Yale Law School, declared that members of the public should, without regard to their political views, expel Mr. Bush from office in order to cleanse the democratic system.

His remarks were met with rousing applause from the hundreds of lawyers and law students in attendance.

Judge Calabresi was born in Milan. His family fled Mussolini in 1939 and settled in America. In 1994, President Clinton appointed the law professor to the federal appeals court that hears cases from the states of New York, Connecticut, and Vermont.

"I'm a judge and so I'm not allowed to talk politics. So I'm not going to talk about some of the issues that were mentioned or what some have said is the extraordinary record of incompetence of this administration," he said.

"I absolutely obviously agree with what Judge Calabresi was trying to get at," said a former chief of staff to Vice President Gore, Ronald Klain.

AUSTRIA BOLSTERS ANIMAL RIGHTS

Compiled from news reports

A new law adopted in Austria, one of Europe's toughest, will ban pet owners from cropping dogs' ears or tails, force farmers to uncage their chickens, and ensure that puppies and kittens no longer swelter in pet shop windows.

Lawmakers voted unanimously to enact the law, which takes effect next January and will be phased in over several years.

It's just the latest example of how animal rights is gaining attention across the continent, after decades of organizing by European activists.

Some others include the following:

The European Commission has proposed a sweeping overhaul of regulations on transporting livestock to give more protection to the hundreds of thousands of animals that are shipped daily and to prevent deaths and abuse.

Hungary has banned cockfighting and the breeding or sale of animals for fighting, and it made animal torture a felony punishable by up to two years in prison.

Last summer, the region of Catalonia, which passed Spain's first animal cruelty law in 1988, banned the killing of abandoned cats and dogs in animal shelters and raised fines for cruelty.

Italy is considering a law that forbids sending horses to the slaughterhouse after their competitive careers are over, and Germany plans to phase out mass farming of caged chickens by the end of 2006.

"This is a first step in the right direction," said Andreas Sax of the Austrian animal rights organization Four Paws. Sax said the law won't do enough to improve conditions for cattle and pigs, who often are injured in cramped pens with slatted floors, and he criticized some sections he said were too vague.

TRIUMPH IN THE TRASH

Al Jazeera

It is a gruesome, inhumane scene. Hordes of children running across a heaving, steaming mountain of rubbish to fight for the contents spilling out of the latest rubbish truck to arrive at the dump.

This is where they eat, sleep and survive—on the detritus thrown out by the rest of society.

"To see children and adults disputing a little of food with horses, pigs...the hunger of thousands of Brazilians provokes revolt, as does the situation and the conditions of work of the great majority of the catadores [rubbish-pickers]," says Heliana Katia Tavares Fields, of the non-governmental organization Water and Life.

According to UNICEF, more than 40,000 children and teenagers live on rubbish dumps in Brazil. They make between 30 cents and $2 a day.

"Families construct slums at the edge of the dumps to survive, but they breathe poisoned air and live in life-threatening situations of extreme poverty," says Elisabeth Grimberg from the Instito Polis and general co-coordinator of the Rubbish and Citizenship Forum.

"When the lorries bring the rubbish, it is all mixed, and the children run to get the food. The first sacks sometimes have food that has been thrown away and is supposedly fit to eat but in reality it is not adequate, not recommended. One of the rights of people is to have enough food. Sometimes the trucks crush children; there are many cases of this in Brazil. Or their hands get mutilated in the mechanism of the truck," she says.

Others suffer from pneumonia, skin disease, fever and diarrhea.

It has been like this for decades and exists in various extremes, from the hard end of those families living on the tips to those who ply their trade on the city center streets. Some estimates put the figure of those who survive on rubbish in Brazil at half a million people.

But out of this desperate situation an extraordinary movement is developing. The catadores are organizing, fighting for their rights and winning.

The idea of being able to get together a national congress of catadores sounds like a pipedream. Yet that is just what they did, 3000 of them marching on the capital Brasilia in 2001.

From this sprang an even more remarkable achievement—a Latin American-wide gathering bringing catadores from Columbia, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Mexico. And with street recyclers from France and Canada coming along to share their experiences they are going global.

"From a political point of view, this is very creative, very new and very strong," says Grimberg. "One of the definitions, one of the choices made by the national movement of catadores is that they don't want to be employed by multinational companies who collect rubbish. Nor for the government. They take part in the public system but the entire organization of the catadores, of the recycling co-operatives, is autonomous self-management," she says.

"The catadores show that the life can be different: solidarity and without misery," according to the governmental hosts of the Latin American-wide conference held in 2003 in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul.

"Articulating environmental protection and citizenship, recycling of lives and objects, the catadores give form to the historical flags supported by the society: social justice, environmental preservation and quality of life. They are collective dreams of the possibility of another worldwide order."

A second international encounter is due in January 2005.

"I work in the Coopamare, the first coop in Sao Paulo, the oldest. It's been there 15 years. Eight of us from the co-op took part in all the events. It was great, we met a lot of people from other different co-ops from other countries," says Marcelo de Jesus Marcario who is sitting on the floor with babe in arms, Marcelinho, surrounded by cardboard emblazoned with slogans.

"What we are doing here today is calling for our rights. In my case I've worked for eight years but many people I know have worked for 30, 40, 50 years and we have never been properly remunerated. We need more help," he says.

"Why do the authorities pay the big companies lots of money when we, the catadores, collect the rubbish, separate the materials in the correct way for recycling and we are not paid for our work?" asks the National Movement of Catadores of Recycled Materials.

In a few years the movement can already boast some amazing advances.

They are no longer officially invisible—catadores were included in the 2000 census for the first time. And street recycling has become a recognized occupation for the first time, winning the same rights as a self-employed worker.

A strong structure has grown up of Rubbish and Citizenship Forums in 23 Brazilian states made up of the recycling industry, non-governmental organizations and trade unions. More than 4,000 neighborhoods now have selective collection of rubbish. There is now an inter-ministerial agenda looking at the issue.

And most municipalities are signed up to the UNICEF campaign Children in Rubbish—Never Again!

Brazilians throw away 134,000 tons of rubbish every day. The amount of waste produced in the world has risen three times faster than population growth. Cities such as Sao Paulo are simply bursting at the seams—there is nowhere else to put the trash.

But public perception is changing as to what is rubbish versus what is raw material primed for recycling—paper, metal, glass and plastic. In 2003, the recycling industry was worth a staggering $1 billion.

Back at the demonstration, the catadores are in full cry, singing their self-penned anthem about recycling of life. The mood is high-spirited, dignified and defiant.

"From day to night, if you lose your job and don't have a family to help you, you too can be in these conditions," says Grimberg. "There's a lot of work still to be done in Brazil."

BOLIVIA: TOWNSPEOPLE KILL THEIR MAYOR

New York Times

Indian residents of Ayo Ayo, a town of 7,000 people, kidnapped their mayor, Benjamín Altamirano, in La Paz, drove him back to his house and burned him to death inside it. Later they dragged his body through the streets. They accused him of corruption.

PERU: TOWN AGREES TO HALT UNREST

New York Times

The people of the southeastern Ilave, who lynched their mayor last month after accusing him of corruption, agreed to suspend weeks of unrest after the federal government said it would withdraw troops. Ilave and the highland region around it have been convulsed by tumult since the villagers killed Mayor Cirilo Robles on April 26 after the central government in Lima failed to heed warnings from angry townspeople. After seven political leaders were arrested on suspicion of having orchestrated the killing, the townspeople blocked roads and pelted journalists with rocks. The government says it will negotiate the town's demands.

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"MICHAEL AND ME" (A CRITIQUE)

excerpted from an article in the Observer

Not much stops the palm-squeezing and back-slapping at the Cannes film festival. But everything freezes as a large man with a fast-food gut and a labored waddle, wispy beard and glasses, makes his way to the door. Here comes Michael Moore, filmmaker, author, political activist, and global phenomenon.

Everyone wanted a piece of him, but after months of requests, I had the only one-on-one interview. Michael and Me, we had a real meeting arranged.

Moore arrived in Cannes by his traditional mode of transport—on a wave of controversy. Disney had announced that it would not distribute his new film, Fahrenheit 9/11, in America, which left the film's producers, Miramax, a division of Disney, looking for a new partner. Moore accused Disney of censoring his film to protect the tax breaks its Disneyworld complex enjoys in Florida, the state controlled by Jeb Bush, brother of the President (Fahrenheit 9/11 details the cronyism and corruption of the Bush regime, as well as its failings in the 'war against terror').

Disney countered that Moore had known for more than a year that it would not handle the film and was only complaining now to publicize his film. Nevertheless, the director once again successfully positioned himself on the moral high ground in a battle against a multinational corporation. He finessed the same maneuver with Stupid White Men, his best-selling critique of American capitalism, by claiming that Harper Collins had tried to suppress the book, and that it only agreed to publish him following a protest by librarians.

The sales of his films and books have made him known across the planet, as well as very rich, but the image he has sold of himself—fat, bumbling, nerdy, but indefatigable—has made him something else: an international man of the people.

As the limousine carrying Moore to his Cannes press conference pulls out of the Majestic, bound for the Palais less than 200 yards up the road, an Argentinian TV crew rushes out into the road to interview the director. The automatic tinted windows slide down and a few brief words are exchanged before a security guard steps in. The man with the microphone tries to give Moore an Argentinian flag but the security guard won't allow him. "Put that down," he warns, as if it were a semi-automatic weapon. The window goes up and the car moves off.

More than Moore's wealth, the question of security is perhaps the issue that most threatens his down-to-earth ordinary Joe persona. In Bowling for Columbine, he posits the theory that America's gun violence problem stems from a culture of fear created by a racist media. Last year, during a residency at the Roundhouse in London, he suggested that if the passengers on 11 September had been black, they would have fought back against the hijackers, and that spoilt whites were too used to having other people look after them.

But during the same series of dates in London, he complained about the lack of security so vehemently that the Roundhouse staff threatened to boycott the show. On stage, Moore was asked why it was that he was flanked by three security men, who stood with their feet apart, hands clasped at their crotches, in an intimidating military stance. The director did as he always does when asked this question, and claimed that they were his fitness trainer, pilates teacher and masseur, then turned the idea that he needed protection into an elaborate joke. "I'm not afraid of anything," he mugged. "Should I be?" The room broke into laughter.

The charge that Moore, who turned 50 last month, has only ever established a partial relationship with the truth is one that stretches way back into his career. Although he has lived in the rarefied neighborhood of Manhattan's Upper West Side for the past 14 years, Moore very rarely lets an interview go by without referring to himself as 'working-class." In fact, he grew up in a middle-class suburb of Flint, in a two-car family. His father was an auto-plant worker who played golf, retired in his fifties, and was well-off enough to send his three children to college.

As an adult, he won $58,000 damages in a suit for wrongful dismissal, sold his house and put all the money into making Roger and Me. The documentary was a notable critical, if not spectacular commercial, success. Thereafter Moore moved to New York and television, making zany political series such as TV Nation and The Awful Truth, which were full of Moore's trademark stunts designed to mock greed and ignorance and humbug.

Behind the scenes, however, a different picture was forming. Moore's employers were confronted with ever more regal demands. He insisted that Channel 4 house him at the Ritz when he worked in England on The Awful Truth, a fact he now portrays as the revenge of the working class against corporate might. Meanwhile employees grumbled. "He's a jerk and a hypocrite and didn't treat us right and he was false in all of his dealings," said one former worker.

To such complaints, Moore has a stock answer, which is that whatever attacks his critics launch at him only make him stronger. "The readership only expands, the viewership for the movies only expands, and they just look ridiculous."

And, statistically, he's right. Currently, there is no more powerful anti-war protester in America, and therefore arguably the world, than Moore. In England, the Mirror named him "the greatest living American." Recently, when he called Bush a "deserter" it caused a scandal in the States, but it also put Bush's dubious record as a National Guardsman during the Vietnam War at the top of the agenda for the first time. He plays sell-out stadiums wherever he travels, and while he has become something of a bogeyman to the American right, and an embarrassment to a small section of the liberal left, he is to many millions the world over the underdogs' most heroic spokesperson. It's a reputation that was cemented by his celebrated Oscar speech at last year's awards ceremony, in which he lambasted Bush.

Now, with my exclusive one-to-one interview, I was, I hoped, about to see the real Michael Moore. But a small cloud had appeared in the brilliant blue Mediterranean sky. The publicity company dealing with Moore in Cannes had resigned, as a fractious working relationship had

REPORT SAYS U.S. HAS "SECRET" DETENTION CENTERS

Reuters

The United States is holding terrorism suspects in more than two dozen detention centers worldwide and about half of these operate in total secrecy, said a human rights report released on Thursday.

Human Rights First, formerly known as the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, said in a report that secrecy surrounding these facilities made "inappropriate detention and abuse not only likely but inevitable."

"The abuses at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib cannot be addressed in isolation," said Deborah Pearlstein, director of the group's U.S. Law and Security program, referring to the U.S. Naval base prison in Cuba and Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq where abuses are being investigated.

"This is all about secrecy, accountability and the law," Pearlstein told a news conference.

The report coincided with news that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld ordered military officials to hold a suspect in a prison near Baghdad without telling the Red Cross. Pearlstein said this would be a violation of the Geneva Conventions and Defense Department directives.

She said thousands of security detainees were being held by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as locations elsewhere which the military refused to disclose.

"The U.S. government is holding prisoners in a secret system of off-shore prisons beyond the reach of adequate supervision, accountability of law," said the report.

Pearlstein said multiple sources reported U.S. detention centers in, among other places, Kohat in Pakistan near the border with Afghanistan, on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia and at Al Jafr prison in Jordan, where the group said the CIA had an interrogation facility.

Pearlstein called for the U.S. authorities to end "secret detentions," provide a list of prisoners, investigate abuses and allow the International Committee of the Red Cross unfettered access to detainees.

Families of suspects detained by U.S. authorities have complained strongly about the lack of information about detainees held by U.S. authorities since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks against the United States.

become intolerable, with Moore apparently reducing one of the publicists to tears. The new publicists, drawn and anxious-looking, were at pains to let me know that the interview would still go ahead. They just couldn't be sure what time it would be. And, oh, one other thing, it had been cut to 15 minutes. Fifteen minutes! That was barely enough time to ask a question, let alone hear it answered.

I waited in the lobby of the Majestic, and was finally allotted a time. The hour came and passed. There was no sign of Moore. He once told an interviewer that he didn't like interviews because he had "no control over what you're going to write." One form of control, of course, is not to arrive.

The publicist told me that Moore's lunch meeting had run over but that she was sure everything would be OK. It was clear from her stricken expression that she had no idea where Moore was. She went away and what seemed like a week later returned with a definite slot and disappointing news. Owing to Moore's other engagements, the interviews now had to be compressed, and I would be sharing my limited time with one journalist from Australia and another from Japan.

Inside a well-manned salon, Moore was sporting a baseball cap with the legend 'Made in Canada', a blue hooded tracksuit top, khaki shorts and sandals. Crouched over a circular conference table, he looked like a lumpen tourist at a Vegas blackjack game, uncertain, ill at ease.

"You cool with them being here?" he asked me conspiratorially, though quite brazenly, in front of the Australian and Japanese journalists.

When I told him that it wasn't what was advertised on the brochure, he said: "Yeah, I don't know what to do here. They've got me so jammed. No offence to you, the Japanese," he gestured to the Japanese woman, "but you both deserve your own time," now gesturing to the Australian woman and myself. Either he doesn't sell too well in Japan or there was a hint of racism in that distinction, but Moore was too caught up in his own drama to notice.

From being the architect of this farrago, Moore turned himself into the victim, betrayed by the nameless, omnipotent "they." He continued in the same vein, currying my favor with his appreciation of the Observer until, to her great credit, the Japanese woman asked if we could begin the interview. At which point Moore burst out laughing, to his credit at himself.

My strategy, given the rushed circumstances, was to dispense with formal inquiries, let the other two ask about the film and general matters, and restrict myself to awkward questions. I wondered if he has any regrets about supporting Ralph Nader, the independent candidate in the previous American presidential election.

"None whatsoever," he says without hesitation, although he's called on Nader not to stand this time round. What's the difference?

He tells me how well he pays his employees the best independent film rates around, and even calls in a young assistant and asks him to tell me how much he earns. 'Eight hundred dollars a week?," he says gingerly. "What else?" asks Moore. "You pay for my cell phone." "So," says Moore, "roughly a thousand a week." Sounds like roughly $800 to me, but who's quibbling?

The point is, he insists, he's not fallen out with any employees since 1994. I ask if he worked out how to be a better employer.

"I just think I'm a better person," he says, his head bowed in theatrically solemn contemplation, "because I'm always struggling to be a better person. I'm a highly flawed individual, as we all are, and because I was raised by Jesuits, I'm constantly, "What is it about me and what I can do to be better"?"

It is doubtless to this mission that he refers in Stupid White Men, when he writes: "If you're white, and you really want to help change things, why not start with yourself?"

With this thought in mind, I ask him why he decided to send his daughter to a private school in Manhattan.

"Oh," he says brightly, "I went to private school. Just a genetic decision. My wife and I, we both went to Catholic schools, we're not public-school [which in the US means state school] people."

So it's not important.

"No, I think it's important and the first five years she went to public school, then we moved to New York and we went to see the local public school and we walked through a metal detector and we said, "We're not putting our child through a metal detector." We'll continue our fight to see to it that our society is such that you don't have to have a metal detector at the entrance to schools. But our daughter is not the one to be sacrificed to make things better. And so she went to a school two blocks away. She just went to the nearest other school."

He makes it sound as if the other school was just a random choice, but private schools on the Upper West Side are all restrictively expensive, and mostly white, just as the state schools are disproportionately black.

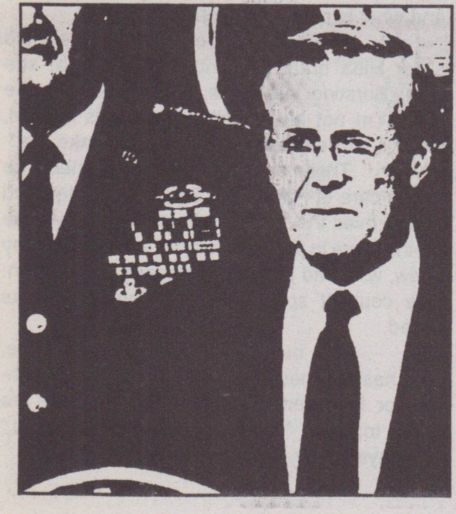
"Is that a bad thing?" he asks rhetorically of his decision, "I don't know. Every parent wants to do what's best for their child. Whatever I can afford, I'm going to get my kid the best education I can get."

I suggest that, while that may be a natural instinct, it's hard to see why it's any different from the Republican philosophy of each man for himself and his family.

"I'm not a liberal. When you come from the working class and you do well enough whereby you can provide a little bit better for your family, get a decent roof over their head and send them to a good school, that's considered a good thing. If," he emphasizes, "you're from the working class. What's bad about it is if you get to do that and then shut the door behind you so nobody else can do that."

Of course, it's nobody's business but Moore's where he sends his child, except he makes it his business to detail the hereditary privilege of his subjects and tends to make his political arguments personal. In Fahrenheit 9/11 one of his stunts is to attempt to get Congressmen to sign their children up for the war in Iraq.

What I think, after my short time in his company, is that Moore is a man you would not want as an opponent, but also one you'd think twice about calling a friend. Though a talented filmmaker and a clever showman, a populist who knows how to play the maverick, he is too often both big-headed and small-minded. In his desire to be seen as the decent man telling truth to power, he is too ready to blame those less powerful than himself for his shortcomings. He was justly revered in the Palais, but out on the street no one had a kind word to say about him. At Cannes, Moore may have been the star but he was not, it seems, the man of the people.



HALF MILLION ON STRIKE IN BEIRUT

Al Jazeera

Lebanese soldiers have shot at demonstrators in a Beirut suburb, killing three and wounding many more.

Security sources said soldiers opened fire when protesters began stone throwing on Thursday, angry over soaring fuel prices.

Two military vehicles were also damaged in the skirmish around the mainly Shia Muslim Hay al-Silum suburb.

Trade unions had called for a general strike to protest against the rise of fuel prices and the economic policies of the government of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

Widespread anger at petrol prices has apparently bolstered support for the strike, with some estimating half a million protesters across the country.

Hariri has urged Justice Minister Bahij Tabbarah and the public prosecutor's office to take action against petrol stations for failing to comply with last week's cabinet decision to lower prices.

FOR IRAQI WOMEN, ABU GHRAIB'S TAINT

PHOTOS—EVEN IF FAKE—SPARK RUMORS THAT HIT FAMILY HONOR

By Annia Ciezadlo | Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

The pictures would horrify anyone: hooded US soldiers raping and torturing naked Iraqi women at gunpoint. But for Farah al-Azzawi, these blurry photos burn with agony and shame.

Ms. Azzawi is part of a secret sisterhood: her mother is one of three women inside Abu Ghraib, the notorious prison where US soldiers took smiling snapshots of themselves sadistically humiliating Iraqis.

That's why some anonymous ill-wisher slipped a newspaper with the rape photos on the front page under her front door.

The pictures in the paper are fakes, bad copies lifted from a porn website and now ricocheting around the Internet. But in Iraq, where the photos circulate on floppy discs and CDs and splash across newspapers and TV screens, most people believe them.

"I know they're not real, but people won't believe it," says Azzawi, a pretty 20-year-old, holding up the paper with a shaking hand. "Who's going to marry their daughters after they see a thing like that?"

It's not just the shame that makes Azzawi's hands shake with rage. What makes the counterfeit photos so searing, for her, is the fear that they might hold some truth. Among the 1,800 or so pictures taken by American soldiers at Abu Ghraib, there are others, viewed by Congress but not released to the public, of at least one Iraqi woman forced to bare her breasts. And a US military investigator, Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, cited at least one case of a military police guard "having sex with" a female prisoner.

A spokesman denies that any of the five women now in coalition custody—three at Abu Ghraib, two more at other locations—have been abused. "All of these women being detained have been treated humanely," says Lt. Col. Barry Johnson, a spokesman for the general in charge of detention operations. "None of their families need to be concerned that their dignity has been tarnished during their detention."

But in Iraq, where rumors alone can destroy a woman's reputation, the consequences of US detention are much more severe for women than for men. In a way, it scarcely matters if Azzawi's mother was raped or not: If she denies being raped, nobody will believe her, because Iraqi women rarely admit to being raped, a charge that can ruin a woman's life.

Now that there are real pictures of US troops sexually humiliating Iraqi women, reality and rumors have tangled inseparably. "With the pictures and the CDs, it becomes almost irrelevant if they're raped or not," says Manal Omar, the Iraq coordinator of Women for Women, which helps women in former war zones. "Even before the torture, the rumor was out that they were raping women in the prison. With or without the pictures from the porn site, the real pictures made people believe that. It made that rumor fact."

Rumors of prison rape have been eddying for months. They started with a letter, allegedly smuggled out of Abu Ghraib by a female prisoner. Passed from one person to another, the letter and the photos are being used by anti-US clerics and militants to stir up outrage against the occupation.

"Please, bomb us with bombs, and even with nuclear weapons, because we are all pregnant by American soldiers," reads one version of the letter. "Every day they walk us naked in front of soldiers and other prisoners. We want you to know that if you have a daughter in here, or a mother, or a sister, that she has been raped and is pregnant by these American soldiers."

The letter might be fabricated—different versions of it crop up, and no one has been able to find the girl who wrote it. But to most Iraqis, it doesn't really matter: the real photos of abuse at Abu Ghraib gave all rumors, both true and false, instant credibility.

Even before the scandal at Abu Ghraib, many Iraqis viewed imprisonment of women as tantamount to rape. "In our culture, if a woman has been to prison, it's as though she has been violated," says Yanar Mohammed, a woman's rights activist and editor of the newspaper Equality. "It is assumed that men have put their hands on her, that she has been touched in improper ways."

In Iraq, even a whisper of rape is enough to dishonor a woman—and her family. Sometimes families will even kill women who have been raped to "wash" the stain from the family name.

That may be what happened to one girl, rumored to have been pregnant when she was released. "Her father and brother wanted to kill her," says Huda al-Nuaimi, a professor at Baghdad University who is interviewing female prisoners as a volunteer for Amnesty International. "The sheikh of the mosque and the neighbors stopped them, because she was raped, and it wasn't her fault."

But when Dr. Nuaimi went to visit the girl, her family had moved away. The neighbors told her they didn't know where they went—unusual in Aadhimiyah, the girl's tight-knit Baghdad neighborhood. "I wonder whether this girl is still alive," says Ms. Nuaimi, a professor who wears a tiny silver outline of Iraq around her neck. "I think, given this local custom, it would be very difficult for her to stay alive."

Azzawi hasn't seen her mother since Dec. 24th, the day she was arrested with her sister, Azzawi's aunt. She goes to Abu Ghraib and spends hours standing in the dusty parking lot, hoping to be allowed to see her mother. But the guards on duty, she says, tell her, "there are no women here."

In fact, there are three women at Abu Ghraib. Kept separately from the men, with female guards, the women are inside cellblock 1A, the infamous ward where most of the military pictures were taken. "They are living together," says Colonel Johnson, "separated from the male detainees, for their own well being and to ensure their privacy is fully respected."

Declining to discuss specific cases, Johnson could not confirm whether Azzawi's mother and aunt were among those three women. But Azzawi got a letter two months ago from the International Committee of the Red Cross, which monitors prison conditions, telling her that her mother was being held at Abu Ghraib. Like most families of detainees, she still doesn't know whether her mother has been charged with any crime.

On May 14, Azzawi was allowed to visit her uncle, also being held at Abu Ghraib. She took her cousin Raghada Qusay, a 14-year-old with large, sad eyes. Raghada's mother—sister of Azzawi's mother—is in Abu Ghraib, too.

The girls were horrified to see that their uncle's nose had been broken. He told them it didn't matter. "What's important are my sisters," he told them tearfully through a glass window. "They were humiliated. I'm desperate."

They listened in horror as he told them what he said he'd seen: Raghada's mother forced to take off her head scarf. "My mother wears a *hijab*, and my uncle told us they were dragging her by her hair," says Raghada, her eyes red from crying.

In a torrent of words, she speaks of other tortures: her mother forced to eat from a dirty toilet. Urinated on. As the stories rush out, it's hard to tell what she heard from her uncle and what is prison scuttlebutt.

As Raghada speaks, her 21-year-old sister Hiba breaks in and demands that she stop. Bursting into tears, Hiba runs from the room."I'm not afraid any more," says Azzawi, angrily. "I'll keep talking, even if they take me!"

These days, the girls spend their time taking care of Raghada's 3-year-old sister, and crying over the phone with other girls whose mothers are in jail. They visited another girl they knew, who had just been released from prison. She couldn't speak; they are sure she was raped.

"It's been five months," says Hiba, who has returned. "We haven't seen our mothers for five months. Azzawi is sure they are being tortured. "One day, they'll be released," she says grimly, "and they'll tell everything."

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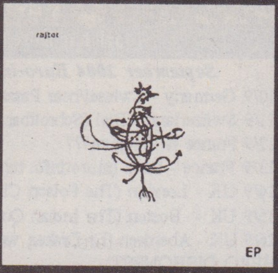

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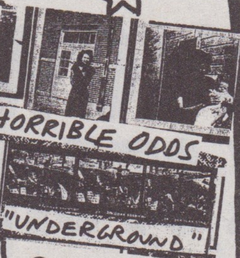

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14/9 UK - London (The Poison Club)
15/9 UK - Boston (The Indian Queen)
16/9 UK - Aberdeen (Dr Drakes, w/AFTERBIRTH, HERO DISHONEST)
17/9 UK - Edinburgh (The Mercat, w/AFTERBIRTH, HERO DISHONEST)
18/9 UK - Bradford (1in12 Club, all day fest w/ AFTERBIRTH, HERO DISHONEST etc.)
19/9 UK - Stoke on Trent or Liverpool???
20/9 UK - Bristol (Junction Club)
21/9 Belgium - Liege???
22/9 Netherlands - Alkmaar (De Raad, w/MARKLAR)
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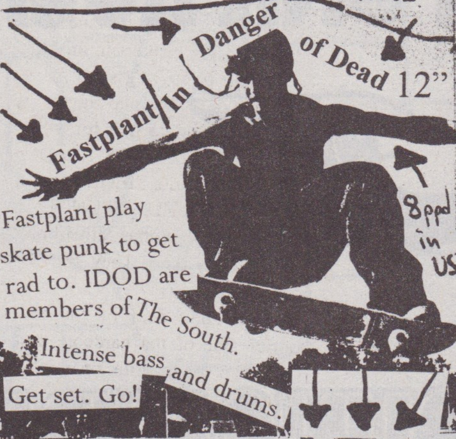

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NEW YORK CITY

Greetings from in New York City where it ain't too pretty but punk is still alive. Haven't been paying attention since THE RAMONES, URBAN WASTE, or CITIZENS ARREST? Well here's a good chance to catch up.
Let's start with venues, shall we?

The longest running DIY venue in the city is ABC No Rio, which was first established as a squat in the Lower East Side of Manhattan in 1980. ABC has been having weekly hardcore punk shows for over fifteen years, and also houses a zine library, a silkscreening lab, a computer lab, and is home base to Manhattan Food Not Bombs. I don't know what's up with the mosh metal shows they've been booking of late, but the summer looks pretty good (read: punk) with FORCA MACABRA and SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS scheduled to play in upcoming weeks. ABC is located at 156 Rivington Street in Manhattan.

Next up is Jane Doe Books, which is into its second year of hosting punk shows, the last including last month's great FUCKED UP show. By day, Jane Doe Books is a volunteer run feminist lending library with tons of books, nice volunteers, and a decent sized collection of zines. Jane Doe is located in Brooklyn on 93 Montrose Avenue.

There aren't any other consistent DIY spaces in New York, as astronomical real estate prices and tiny little apartments make even house shows a somewhat rare commodity. Nonetheless, there have been a lot more house shows in Brooklyn in the past year or two than I remember there ever having been in the past. Unfortunately, a lot of touring DIY punk bands including Tragedy, Dropdead, Career Suicide, Inepsy, and Annihilation Time have had to resort to playing in 21+ bars and shitty rock clubs. ABC No Rio, where were you for those?

There are a lot of different kinds of punk bands in New York, so I'll do my best to cover as much as I can. Hopefully, I didn't forget anything too major but if I did, you should let me know. Let's start with hardcore punk.

SANGRE DE LOS PUERCOS, who have members of NYC greats DISTRAUGHT and BALANCE OF TERROR, have been together for a couple of years and have two 7"s out. They play internationally minded HC with elements of Scandinavian and Italian thrash, but with strong US punk vibe. Their newest 7" is on Hemorrhaging Loudness records. Todd, who plays drums in SANGRE is also the drummer for THOUGHT CRIME and INSURRECTION, who also include Chris from SANGRE (another BALANCE OF TERROR alum). THOUGHT CRIME have an album out on Tribal War records. INSURRECTION, who are on what sadly seems like a permanent hiatus have a really great demo of raw, straightforward hardcore punk that you should try to track down. It includes an excellent MECHT MENSCH cover. Chris is also in a new band called FALSE SECURITY which takes its cues from the first RIISTETYT album and is about to play its first shows. A FALSE SECURITY demo is in the works.

Another band that includes ex-members of BALANCE OF TERROR is WRECKAGE, who have a demo out called This is America. That demo, which showcases WRECKAGE'S fast U.S. styled hardcore, is about to be pressed as their first 7" by Swedish label Busted Heads. From what I've noticed at shows, Wreckage have been adding a bit more rock into their vibe, and I'm sure they'll release some newer material fairly soon. Anyway, I think that wraps it up (in this city, anyway) of ex-BALANCE OF TERROR bands.

WITCHHUNT are not actually based in New York City (they're from Jersey) but they sure play here a lot and are a big part of the NYC scene. They have a 7" out, along with a split 7" with the now-defunct DEATHBAG. I got the good news recently that they are currently working on their first full length LP which is going to be released by Profane Existence. Congratulations! WITCHHUNT are among the nicest and hardest working punkers in this area, and I think they might be touring soon so you should go check them out. They play aggressive hardcore punk tempered with a flair for moody UK-styled peace punk a la ZOUNDS. Also, they do a great cover of my favorite SIEGE song.

Long time NYC punks HUASIPUNGO are still around in one form or another, albeit much changed from their early days. They still play the occasional show.

There is also a good deal of the more screamy, "chaotic" side of the hardcore spectrum here in NYC. A favorite of mine is HIRETSUKAN, who have a CDEP out on G-7 Welcoming Committee featuring some fucking intense vocals and dissonant guitar work. HIRETSUKAN broke up for a bit, but are now back together and planning on touring pretty soon.

Then there's BOOKS LIE from Brooklyn, who at the beginning reminded me a little of BORN AGAINST but who have evolved quite a bit over their last few records into one of the more popular Gravity records styled bands on the East Coast. They have a new 12" out on Level-Plane records, and are touring this July. Level-Plane used to be based in NYC, but I guess they moved at some point to Charlottesville.

There is a pretty active garage punk scene in New York City. First of all, there is Tom Dash who puts together great shows under the Dot-Dash heading all around New York. Dot-Dash shows were first started in order to showcase the emergent NYC garage punk scene, but have since helped some of the best garage punk bands in the country, including the CLONE DEFECTS, THE BLACK LIPS, TYRADES, and THE SPITS play in New York. For a really good interview with Dot-Dash, you should check out New York's best garage punk zine *Trash Faction* #3. Tom is currently playing in a new band called THE SHOP FRONTS, who I haven't heard yet.

NYC darlings THE LITTLE KILLERS have a full length LP out on Crypt records along with a handful of EPs. In fact, Crypt came out of semi-retirement just to put out the LITTLE KILLERS LP, which is a pretty incredible considering that label's illustrious history with the *Back From the Grave* comps as well as the GORIES, THEE HEADCOATS, and THE PAGANS. THE LITTLE KILLERS are currently on a seven-week European tour, but they'll be back to play in NYC this summer. Also associated with the Dot-Dash scene are SOME ACTION, who bill themselves as "outlaws in a city where dancing and smoking is illegal." They have a self-titled 7" out on Gigantic records. And who could forget THE SHEMPS, who feature *MRR's* very own Bill Florio? They have a split 7" out on Gloom records with TO HELL AND BACK and have a CD coming out soon too.

One of the most active DIY scenes in NYC is the local pop punk scene. Seriously, these kids act like they're in the East Bay circa 1988 with what seems like hundreds of CRIMPSHRINE patches between twenty people, and a lot of them are super involved in putting on DIY shows in Brooklyn. BEER GARDEN have been compared to BLATZ, and have a CD that came out last year on Drunk Tank records. They have a great vocalist named Gaylen, who is also in VAGINA BEACH. Also in VAGINA BEACH is Jamie, who plays in BENT OUTTA SHAPE. You may remember Jamie from THE LAZER, who have broken up; BENT pick up more or less where THE LAZER left off. They have just released an LP also on Drunk Tank and are currently on tour. Try to catch them when they're in your town. Another newer band is called PISS DEATH, who feature Jon from *Abort!* zine and have some catchy hooks and aggressive female vocals.

New York is also home to long-running street

WITCHHUNT

BENT OUTTA SHAPE

punkers MOLOTOV COCKTAIL, who were featured in the June issue of *MRR*. They have some records out, including a live split with long defunct legends DISTRAUGHT. I think this split was culled from a show at CBGBs. MOLOTOV COCKTAIL has shared members with THE STOCKYARD STOICS, who also have members of MDC and have released a 7" or two. Aron of the STOCKYARD STOICS also plays in the Cramps lovin' X-POSSIBLES.

Along with bands, there are also a whole bunch of great DIY zines in NYC. Shit, even Aaron Cometbus lives here now, though Maddy *Tight Pants* just moved away. I'll stick to mentioning a handful of my favorite music related zines. First off is *Voices Wake US...*, which is edited by Ben (who also sings in FALSE SECURITY). Ben writes in depth reviews and articles about raw punk and kult metal. His latest issue is a split with *Hazardous Waste* zine, which is not from NYC but is also great. Many of you are probably familiar with *Game Of The Arseholes* zine and record label, which is now city based as well ever since Stuart *GOTA* moved to Brooklyn. In the past couple of years, GOTA records has released music by Besthoven, Disclose, and Worms' Meat and an international raw punk comp is on the way. *GOTA* the zine is also part of the Fanzine Underground Committee on Knowledge (or FUCK—har har) which is an international zine collective that has put together two installments so far. Stuart is also still running Crust War Overseas and a great record distro, though for those of you keeping score the address for those endeavors remains in New Jersey, proving that you can take the boy out of Jersey but his distro stays with mom! Also part of FUCK is the aforementioned *Trash Faction* zine, which focuses mainly on garage punk. Jill's zine always has some of the best cut'n'paste layout in punk. She also did a short-lived hardcore zine called *Nope!!* which involved blood splattered covers! There is also *Abort!* zine based in Brooklyn, which involves music reviews but is at its best when Jonathan is writing about his personal adventures. *Abort!* just put out a long anthology of work collecting stuff from the first 10 or 12 issues. Also based in Brooklyn is *Square One Again* run by yours truly, which is about to release a split with *Voices Wake US...,*. *Square One Again* is (usually) a 4 pager that focuses on DIY hardcore punk past and present.

Before I sign off, I also want to mention Wowsville record store, which is located on 2nd avenue between 7th street and St. Marks place in Manhattan. Wowsville isn't very big, and can be a bit overpriced (especially by non-New York standards) but they have some incredible original pictures and posters of the early punk years on the walls. There is seriously a ton of cool stuff to look at in this store, so if you are just passing through I recommend checking it out. Wowsville is also your best bet for KBD type reissues, as well as random or hard to find new releases. The only other record store in NYC that is vaguely punk is Generation records on Thompson street between 3rd street and Bleeker. The dudes who work there are all really into FAITH NO MORE, but this is the place you can find the latest releases by most U.S. hardcore labels

There are a lot of different kinds of punk rock in New York, and there isn't always a lot of conversation between scenes. I guess in a city of nearly nine million it's hard stay connected to everyone. Regardless, NYC is more fun than ever, so keep on the lookout for even more punk rock yet to come.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Hey, this is Doc Gaskill, I've been playing gigs a making tunes here in the Black Hills for about 30 years, I am the oldest punker in the hills, oh freakin' yah! Anyway I read the reply from the guy "Tanner" who was railing you about something that was said about the local music scene here. Here's the straight shit the venues here pay little or nothing to the players. There are fewer and fewer venues every year due to the greedy venue owners who won't put anything back into the local system, thus cutting their own throats. There are a few open mic's around that feature local up and comers and wanna bees, which have to travel a long way usually to even get to a gig. Some of the hill towns allow busting playing the streets for tips, and others who have made it a crime to be a street musician. There are a lot of local kids (children of the wealthy locals) who have had to lot of time to waste so they become "musicians" to fill in the wasted lives and try to be "cool" and use this to "get chicks", very fuckin' lame. These are mostly three chord shlock psedo posers, makes me want to slap the makeup off their fake candy asses. These local "favorites" get most of the local paying gigs. To be fair there are many others who won't go and play out cause of the bullshit they have to endure, and there are some others who will go out and play the streets and odd coffee houses and bars for short pay and tips, maybe a beer as well. This last group of players is where me and my cronies fall in place, mostly old folks and bluesers, with a touch of world beat, punk, and electronica, we play for the hell of it mostly, and don't give a shit for the plasticized crap offered to the tourists. I can speak for most of us players here in the hills when I say that we play so that the music doesn't die off and allow the shlockrock to take over. Yea I'm pretty fuckin' outspoken bout it around here, and as for "Tanner". Never heard of him.

The rank outsider Doc Gaskill puffinremedy@yahoo.com

CZECH REPUBLIC

Greetings, my name's Filip, I am from Brno/Czech Republic and if all goes well, I will be writing some hot news from our country's scene to MRR every couple of months. Just the mandatory warning/disclaimer from the very start: NO, I don't know about everything and NO, I will not cover everything taking place in our corner of the world when speaking about punk/HC. This is also because my very own definition of what is and what isn't punk is probably a bit narrow-minded (especially when speaking about the "business approach" to punk), so either deal with it and shut up or send your own news and write a letter to this fine magazine about how much I suck. OK?

So summertime is slowly approaching and it means a shit load of festivals. So in case you are planning your summer holidays and wondering if you should or shouldn't explore these wastelands of the former East bloc (don't worry about anything, we are as globalized and Americanized as the rest of the world!), you may consider some of these options…

23. - 24. 6. Brno – Yacht Club, "No Speed Limit hardcore/punk fiesta" organized by our United Crusties Collective, 2 days/12 bands include: MUNICIPAL WASTE, GRIDE, SUPERAPE X, LAHAR, D.F.A., LYCANTHROPHY, FESTA DESPERATO, SPACE TO BEING etc. Widescreen videoprojection (w/"All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2002" video!), Food Not Bombs, tons of distros. More info: www.seeyouinhell.cz.

9. - 10. 7. Trutnov – Na Bojisti, "Obscene Extreme Fest Vol. 6", the biggest grind/brutal death metal and a little bit of crust festival in this part of the world. 2 days/30 bands include: UNCURBED, LAHAR, GRIDE, BIRDFLESH, LE SCRAWL, COMA, MATKA TERESA, ABORTION, ANTIGAMA, MINDFLAIR and some band called EXTREME NOISE TERROR. The thing I like about this fest is it's infamous (at least in the eyes of some Czech metalheads) food policy here, there is only vegan food sold in the fest's areal! More info: www.obscene.cz.

23. - 25. 7. Plzen – Summer Camp, "Fluff Fest Vol. 5", the biggest hardcore fest in this part of the world, though mostly the H8000 metal and emo bands fill the bill, 3 days/approx. 30 bands include: ENDSTAND, LIAR, HIGHSCORE, YAGE, ANALENA, MY OWN LIES, X-WING, ESGMEQ, LAHAR, PURIFICATION, DESTINY etc. More info: www.fluffmusic.com

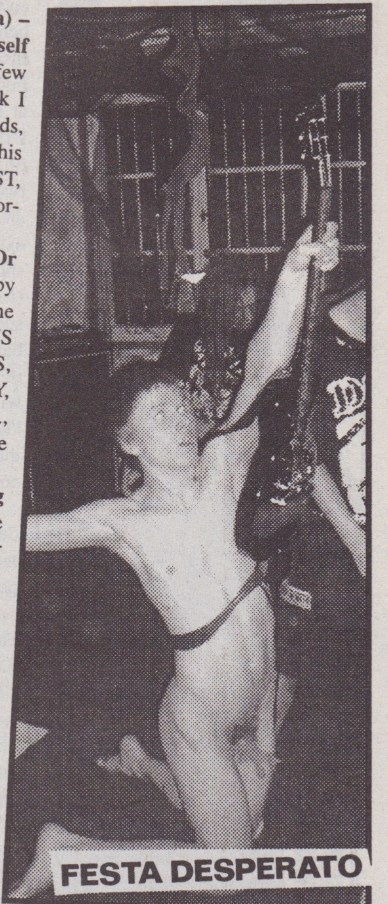
6. - 8. 8. 2004 Trutnov – Na Bojisti, "Antisociety Fest Vol. 10". Fuck, don't force to write anything about this street punk/oi event. It's just the Czech version of Holidays In The Sun. I have heard that G.B.H. and ABRASIVE WHEELS are staring this year, last year it was EXPLOITED. Enough said. More info: www.antifest.cz

13. - 14. 8. Zborov nad Bystricou (near Cadca) – some local gym, "Save The Planet, Kill Yourself Fest Vol. 2", this one is in Slovakia, but it's just few km from Czech (and Polish!) borders, so I think I may mention it as well, 2 days/approx. 20 bands, organized by SUPERAPE X drummer Ozon, this year the line-up includes COCKROACH, LOST, SUPERAPE X and more. More info: humanmeatforsale@hotmail.com.

14. 8. Lukavice (near Letohrad) – "Play Fast Or Don't Fest", extreme HC/grind fest organized by NEEDFUL THINGS/LYCANTHROPHY guys, line up include: ENTRAILS MASSACRE, SANITYS DAWN, COCKROACH, HOMO CONSUMENS, GRIDE, LAHAR, YACOPSAE, LYCANTHROPHY, MALIGNANT TUMOUR, GEORGE BITCH JR., NEEDFUL THINGS, BOMBSTRIKE etc. More info: www.needfulthings.wz.cz

There should be also the summer's **"Gathering Of Free Minds"** organized by Vrah Club's pose some time in the mid of August somewhere near their Roznov pod Radhostem home town, this is probably my fave fest – going strong since 90's with mostly local bands (last year bands like HOMO CONSUMENS, AD CALENDAS GRAECAS, V.V.B. have played) playing in some open air place in the middle of montains. Write for more info about this year's date and line up write to malariepunk@seznam.cz.

Of course we have the usual big number of average shows, except these above-mentioned fests, there are foreign bands cruising the Czech all the time, sometimes good, other times worse experiences, but probably always with big expectations on their part. I would just recommend to think twice before attempting to tour Europe or the world, even these ex-Communist countries who used to be a heaven for foreign hardcore/punk bands on tour (I am not talking about the money, but about the big number of people at their shows and the warm response these bands use to receive here) are now pretty fed up with so many bands constantly on tour and the situation is getting more and more shaped to the state of things in other countries around us. 20 to 50 people at your show becomes quite normal, so don't expect too much. But if you work hard enough and release some stuff (preferably on vinyl) first, then make sure it gets distributed well in the country you want to tour or even better you let some label to re-release your shit on tape here, then it should be better. Just in the last few weeks we did here in Brno, 2 shows with really low attendance, 30 people for VIIMEINNEN KOLONA from Finland, but at least the band seemed to be happy with the excessive absinth consumption here, the guitar player had to go see the doctor immediately after arriving home because of a fucked up



FESTA DESPERATO

AD CALENDAS GRAECAS

DREAD 101

HOMO CONSUMENS

LAHAR

liver. 50 people for Brazilians SICK TERROR isn't the best, but sadly many bands who think that they are known worldwide aren't so well known over here. And with many people's preferable style being this so called "political" (if it's political to scream all the time about the same washed up crowd-pleasing slogans, then fuck me) ska-punk or whatever style, the out of control short, fast, loud and raw hardcore/punk is kind of non-fashionable now over here. But enough of complaining, I would say if you are ready, we are ready, so don't hesitate to come down here to spread your gospel of fucked up noise.

Let's talk about some bands

Bad news, **DREAD 101** has called it quits back in autumn of 2003, leaving few cool vinyls (the last one being the split LP with SOCIAL INSECURITY on Insane Society) and few European tours behind them. Fuck, one of the best Czech bands is dead and gone, but at least they managed to tour Scandinavia and support DISCHARGE on their Finnish reunion show. But the drummer stopped drinking and started the new band with two BALACLAVA members, everybody's expeactations are high, I guess it should be something in a more extreme HC vein and we are all looking for their first show. The bassplayer plays in V.I.R., guitar-player Ethan (formerly the citizen of Portland) plays in swedish cover song band called **ANTI-CLIMAX** and also the singer has some new band. There will be post-humous split EP of DREAD 101 with V.I.R. out soon on Insane Society with songs from the same recording session as their "Dying Alive/Living Dead" compilation stuff. Expect the usual brutal dose of Scandinavia influenced crust-core.

Speaking about **V.I.R.**, this bands smokes, they play devastating mid-tempo crust with some industrial elements and fire-breathing live show included. the metal percussion and grinding machine in the work. Probably some AXEGINDER, ANTISECT or MISERY influences are to be found here, the lyrics are pretty radical and nihilistic at the same time and the main part of their line-up comes from the infamous wild-punk cave of the now evicted Prague's Papirna squat. Only a promo Cdr recorded so far, but make sure to check out the above-mentioned split EP, this band kills! Contact: papirna@post.cz

In the beginning of this year **GRIDE** almost splitted up, thus cancelling the planned UK tour with SEE YOU IN HELL and causing the heart-collapse to Barvak (the Insane Society's boss who just lost DREAD 101), but after some brain-storming they decided not to throw the towel yet and they continue with some cool live shows on the way. They should finally rehearse some new songs and release some new stuff as their one sided "Tanec Blaznu" LP (on French's Chimeres label) it's like three years old already. Discography CD of their 1996-2000 (or something like it) stuff should be out soon on some death/grind label from Prag. Contact: gride.core@worldonline.cz.

LAHAR comes from the same part of Czech as GRIDE, the South, so they can finally start to push the "south-core" label together with few other extreme HC bands from this area (RABIES, GREX, P.P.M.H). LAHAR plays ultra-fast HC with screaming vocals and all their songs are around 30 seconds in length. They have a demo out and appear on "Sekec Mazec 3" comp. EP too, there are two more compilations (comp. LP on 625 and comp. EP of INFEST covers on Impragnate) in the works. The best thing about this band is their image, with guitar and bass players being the long time tatoo and piercing artists, and the fact that the singer runs one of the most active emo/pop punk labels in Czech, fuck, I'm just kidding, the best thing is that they play really fast. Contact through Samuel Records label.

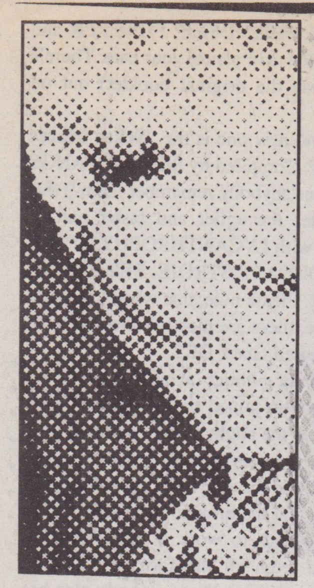
BALACLAVA is one of the older bands who are still active playing their charged HC since mid of 90's, but with only one full EP and one split EP out so far. They play mostly the animal righths benefit shows in Prague's 007 Club. Live they really ass-kicking and turning the mosh pit to complete frenzy, but they should really release something new (there is split EP with CO-CA in the work).

MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS are the Czech Republic's premiere crust band today, after the sad DREAD 101's demise. Heavy and completely crushing crust, two split Eps out (with DRESCHFLEGEL and the brand-new one with COMA, both on the drummer's Impregnate Records label) and two more vinyls planned (split LP with VISIONS OF WAR, split EP with ALAMOGORDO). I just saw them live yesterday and they also managed to execute the "Sista Kriget" by DISFEAR successfully, still they sounded to me like some of my favorite brazilian grave crusties (ARMAGEDOM, DESASTRE, BESTHOVEN) than their Swedish masters. Contact through Impregnate adress.

V.V.B. (VYBOR VEREJNEHO BLAHA) now if there's some band attempting for the "banned from the review section of MRR" tag, then it's V.V.B. The bastard mix of hip hop and punk with some straight to the point and pretty provocative lyrics and Vrah Club people as band-members just put out a full LP and I really hope they will send a copy for the review. Honestly, I think that despite the drum machine and some vinyl scraching parts (provided by DJ Martin of Malarie Records) it is still punk as fuck musically mainly thanx to the sharp guitar played by Fekal (from CO-CA). They also cover some Polish oldies like DEZERTER and REJESTRACJA and they do it pretty well. Check out the new LP (out on Malarie and two Slovakian labels, K.A.Z. and Human Meat For Sale Records) and their older split EP with HOMO CONSUMENS. Definitely one of the best bands in Czech right now. Contact through Malarie Records adress.

INNOXIA CORPORA just recorded for their 2nd LP (also out on Malarie), expect some slight change in the style, less punk more rock'n'roll, still pretty good in my opinion. They do some BLACK SABBATH cover live now, speaking about gigs they supported SELFISH in Vrah, HARUM SCARUM at 007 and POISON IDEA in Brno recently. Now back to four piece with the original singer out from the band. Contact innoxia.corpora@centrum.cz

FESTA DESPERATO recorded for 2nd demo and split EP with SICK TERROR in Vrah's Moc Plevele studio a few months ago. The record is still not out (it was supposed to be ready for their Czech mini tour) and I am not sure if it's gona be released in Brazil or on the singer's Mirek Ultima Ratio label. Their newer stuff is pretty raging, noisy punk as fuck demolition in the vein of old Finnish bands. Make sure to check out their first demo and lets hope that this new recording will see the light of the day soon. Mirek is leaving the band soon trying to start two brand-new bands here in Brno, so we could become the proud bearers of "Distort Brno" label, but the band will continue with a new singer. They were also touring and playing insanely during the last few months, touring not only with SICK TERROR, but also for 10 days with Slovakian noise thrashers S.I.K.A. through Hungarz, Austria, Slovenija and Italy, supporting every foreign band playing in Brno. Contact through Ultima Ratio adress.



SEE YOU IN HELL just recorded for their first LP, which should be released this summer on Insane Society/Ultima Ratio Records, 11 new songs of raw and dark hardcore/thrash. We did a few smaller tours around Czech with FESTA DESPERATO and HOMO CONSUMENS recently, soon we will support FROM ASHES RISES on two gigs and there's two weeks European tour in September, more about that later. We also open the pretty well done (and sadly pretty limited too) double EP comp. "Global Hardcore Noise" on San Francisco's Cities In Dust label with the SODOM cover version. I became a father in the beginning of April, so now there are four daughters among the four members of the band.

MALIGNANT TUMOUR played in the autumn of 2003 in yet another line-up, this time they are based in their Ostrava city hometown again after two years when the band's leader Bilos has lived in Holland (their "Dawn Of A New Age" full LP on Insane Society is recorded in their Dutch line up). They changed their style a bit too, now it's something like the collision of UNCURBED with MOTORHEAD and AGATHOCLES. Crazy live shows include not only the usual punk as fuck bullet belts/heavy metal jackets fashion, but also the artificial wigs and moustaches making them look like porn actors from German 70's movies. Definitely the most funny live band in Czech recently. They just recorded for split EP with LYCANTHROPHY and some more songs which will be released as a bonus on the newest press of their old split CD with SQUASH BOWELS on Obscene Prod. Check out the new MT website under the www.insanesociety.net site.

AD CALENDAS GRAECAS put out an excellent LP on Ultima Ratio, if you like some of the bands on Lengua Armada, you should like them, not only musicall, but artistically as well the record itself is pretty nice (with a poster, printed inner bag etc.). Fast and furious hardcore/punk, great political lyrics. Split EP with HOMO CONSUMENS out soon on Impregnate. Contact: huste.punx@tiscali.cz

Just briefly about few more bands, **CO-CA** are still without a bass-player so they don't play live, make sure to check out their 10" released last summer on Malarie, driving and catchy punk as fuck! **INKOGRUENCE** is new band coming from town near Prague, kind of out of tune extreme HC with ultra-brutal screaming female vocals, **KONFIDENT** comes from the VRAH Club area and plays hard-hitting hardcore/punk in the vein of **RESIST**, tape out on Ultima Ratio. **GOSPEL OF THE FUTURE** is new band with ex-**MINDLOCK**'s singer Alesh beating the skins and the former **MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS** guitarplayer singing, fast HC/grind, full 7" planned on the guitar players label. **IDIOTI NOVE DOBY** is the new punk as fuck band with the currerent **MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS** guitar player in the line-up, they did pretty good tape on Impregnate.

Some more cool Czech bands you should check out, **LYCANTHROPHY** (infernal grind ala WARSORE in the past, now more in the **DESPISE YOU** vein fastcore), **DEZINFEKCE** (heavy HC/punk, also on "Global Hardcore Noise" comp.), **SPACE TO BEING** (thrashing fastcore, split EP with TASTE OF FLESH from Indonesia out now), **HOMO CONSUMENS** (raw punk in the vein of Italian and Swedish masters, split EP with **VVB** and split tape with **SEE YOU IN HELL** out), **NOT** (fastcore, split 7" with **SHEEVA YOGA** and new split tape with **RABIES** out), **SICHERHATE SYSTEM** (**BLACK FLAG**'s "First Four Years" era sounding punk, two demo tapes out), **ZEMEZLUC** (old school punk active since 80s, tons of vinyls out) and **THEMA 11** (slow and dark **NEUROSIS** style HC, full LP out on Insane Society).

Gigs and tours

While the hardcore/punk bands from Czech don't tour U.S. or Japan yet, many of them play around Europe regularly, just few days ago **MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS** and **MALIGNANT TUMOUR** finished their insane three weeks tour through Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, bringing their raw music and drunk life-style to some of the lesser visited parts of the world. I just saw the last show of this tour in Znojmo's Gogo Club and it was excellent. From what I have heard, some of the gigs were excellent, but more than once it was a problem for the organizer to feed and house the bands and the whole tour ended up in debt.

SEE YOU IN HELL and **HOMO CONSUMENS** will tour Europe from 10th to 24th September, this time we will hit England and Scotland especially, so make sure to come to see us if you are hungry for some raw and violent hardcore. We also play in Germany, France, Belgium and Netherlands along the way, check out the gig dates here: www.seeyouinhell.cz.

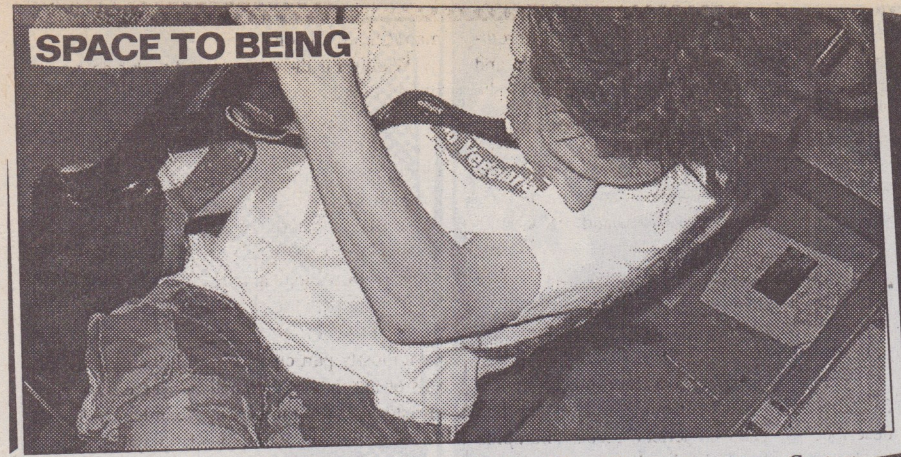
I have heard that there are other Czech bands touring UK separately this summer – RED SILAS (punk as fuck like RESIST) and **NOT**, but I don't know any details about it.

If you are coming to Czech and look for some gig info, always make sure to check out www.czechcore.cz website, it?s the best source for hardcore/punk shows in this country. Most of the gigs are organized in Prague (007 Club, Strahov's Hill, Milada squat, Holesovice quarter Pancor Club ? Vinohradska street, near the city centre), Brno (Yacht Club, U Babicky Pub), Roznov pod Radhostem (Vrah Club), Hradec Kralove (Klidek youth centre), Teplice (Podletna Pub), Pisek (Paluba Pub), Otrokovice (U Lacigu pub), Prelouc (Cosa Nostra Club), Vsetin (Pod Klenbou Pub, Sandrik Club), Pardubice (Ponorka Club) or Znojmo (Gogo Club). Consult your world map to find some of these places, these are also towns where most of the foreign hardcore/punk bands play when they tour Czech. Of course there are many more, these are just the most regular, mostly going strong for some longer time already.

By the way thanx a lot to everybody who helped supporting the Vrah Club financially. There was big number of benefit shows all around Czech and some support came from abroad as well. Now there is this huge debt from the beginning of 2004, almost paid off, if there is some money left, they will use it to buy new equipment. To find out about future shows in this active self-run space in country check out www.malarie.ind.cz.

Labels news

Insane Society Records: CONSUME "Discography" CD/tape, THEMA ELEVEN LP, SICK TERROR/CATHODE split EP, COMA/MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS split EP,



MALIGNANT TUMOUR LP/CD, v/a "Dying Alive/Living Dead" tape, MUNICIPAL WASTE tape etc. Planned: DREAD 101/V.I.R. split EP, LYCANTHROPHY/MALIGNANT TUMOUR split EP, COMA LP/CD/tape, SEE YOU IN HELL LP/tape. Contact: www.insane-society.net

Impregnate Noise Laboratories: COMA/MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS split EP, SHITNOISE tape, v/a "Killed By Noise" tape, DEN ZA DNEM/RABIES split EP, MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS/DRESCHFLEGEL split EP, MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS "Drunk, Crust, Distroy" CDr etc. Planned: v/a "Tribute To Infest" EP, HOMO CONSUMENS/AD CALENDAS GRAECAS split EP, LYCANTHROPHY/SEWN SHUT split EP, OPSTAND tape, SEWN SHUT tape etc. Contact: www.impregnate.wz.cz

Out Of Control Records: FUCK ON THE BEACH/YACOPSAE split EP, NOT/RABIES split tape, v/a "Sekec Mazec 3" EP. Planned: v/a "Japancore Forever" tape/CD, YACOPSAE tape, v/a "Tribute To Warsore" 10" etc. Contact: www.lycanthrophy.wz.cz

Drugs Kill Your Mind: v/a "Sekec Mazec 3" EP, SIKA/BINGO split EP, 9 SHOCKS TERROR discography tape, SPACE TO BEING/TASTE OF FLESH split EP, planned VOETSEK tape, TEAR IT UP tape etc. Contact: doomsday@centrum.cz

Ultima Ratio Records: KONFIDENT tape, VIIMEINNEN KOLONA tape, FESTA DESPERATO tape, AD CALENDAS GRAECAS LP. Planned: SEE YOU IN HELL LP, BEYOND DESCRIPTION tape, FOOLOCRACY LP etc. Contact: ultima.ratio@seznam.cz

Samuel Records: IDIOT SAVANT/WHO'S MY SAVIOUR split 10", contact: samuel.records@seznam.cz

Phobia Records: WOJCZECH EP, 9 SHOCKS TERROR tape, v/a "Dying Alive/Living Dead" LP, TASTE OF FLESH/SPACE TO BEING split EP, CONFUSIONE tape. Contact: phobia@centrum.cz

There are two cool compilations if you want to check some Czech fast/raw hardcore bands on one platter. The first one is "Dying Alive/Living Dead" comp. LP, put out last year and there may be some copies left (ask any of the above-mentioned labels), 12 bands, 60 pages full page format booklet included, long Czech scene report from 1978 to 2003 written in English, best compilation released in last 10 years according to Heartattack reviewer. DREAD 101, UNDERFIRE, SEE YOU IN HELL, NOT, NEMA BARIKADA, MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS, HOMO CONSUMENS, GRIDE, SICHERHATE SYSTEM, SPACE TO BEING, FRIENDSHIP FOREVER and INNOXIA CORPORA will please your ears. There's tape verison (include the original booklet) out on Insane Society.

Second and brand new one is the **"Sekec Mazec 3"** and it's on 7" EP. Compiled by Steby (ex-PANGS OF REMORSE, does anybody remember them?) this fine record compiles the uglier and faster part of Czech scene again with LYCANTHROPHY, SPACE TO BEING, NESOUCAST STROJE, SEE YOU IN HELL and LAHAR. Please note, that when I am talking about tapes here, these are mostly factory printed proffessionally released tapes, OK?

I didn't talk about politics at all, so just very briefly, Czech Republic joined the European Union in May, which meant the slight change in tax system (Harley Davidson's motorcycles are cheaper, almost everything else include the vinyl records production is more expensive) and the broken promises of open borders and possibilities to work in EU countries. Well, only Ireland from all the former EU states opened its labout market totally, everybody else has put restrictions on us (of course these are only one sided, citizens of the old EU countries are free to work here in Czech) and the same goes with the borders, where they still stop and control you. So not much has changed for us and we will be 2nd class citizens of the EU atleast for the next few years.

I am working on some longer article about the history of Czechoslovakian hardcore/punk scene in the 70s/80s, I hope to have it ready during the summer and publish it in *MRR*. Expect something slightly different from the report in v/a "Dying Alive/living Dead" or from the summary in my "Kytary a rev" book, also you will have the chance to see some unpublished photos.

Thanx for your attention, write me:
Filip Fuchs
Grohova 39
602 00 Czech Rep.
orba@seznam.cz
www.seeyouinhell.cz

PINOY PUNK REPORT

Over eight million Filipinos are scattered all over the world , some fled the country for jobs in greener pastures , others escaped the dictatorship under Ferdinand Marcos during the 70s and 80s .

The Philippines is a third world country that has undergone conquest and occupation from Spain , the U.S. , and during World War Two ,from the Japanese and even today conitinues with the struggle against CIA terrorist creation Abu Sayaff from the southern islands .We are a colonized people who's original culture was almost erradicated by Spain's 400 year rule . In the 1800's after winning our independence from our castillian rulers , America annexed the country and laid the foundation for the US relations that exist today in the form of naval bases and training programs sponsored by CIA operatives to combat so-called terrorist cells.

Many factors led to to the immigration of Filipinos but whether impoverished or seeking oppurtunity elsewhere , we have found a home here in the underground , world culture of punk rock .

In the bay area, the Gonzales brothers, Jessie and Ogie started the Pinoisepop festival in 1998 due to a need to reach out and find other Filipino or asian american musicians or fans of music other than the mainstream . The Gonzales brothers played in a band in the Philippines called Valley of Death, they played Descendants and Agnostic Front covers and composed a number of their own songs that were featured on a compilation called *Where Do We go from Here* released on the Philippines' first DIY label called Twisted Red Cross .Jessie and Ogie knew of the strong foundation of early Philippine punk

acts like The Philippine Violators, Dead Ends and WUDS and their influence on the younger generations that moved to the US so they decided to put on an event that might help connect countrymen to countrymen .

Some of the bands are as follows :

Signal 3 was the first band that I or my peers know of that played punk rock/Oi! in Tagalog (main dialect of the northern islands) and English .Five friendly but forboding looking filipino skinheads from Los Angeles who have two full lengths under their belt *Convergence Zone* and *Kingsley United* released independantly on Miscreant Records. Signal 3 is melodic and power driving Oi music with a nod to early punk bands like the Oppressed and Sham as well as the Urban Bandits from home . They toured the Philippines once, the States twice or three times . Contact info : bagyo3@hotmail.com www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/performance/1202/sn3home.html **Kadena** from New York is a three piece street punk band with influences from Conflict and early Defiance .Hardy lyrics about the proletariat revolution and staying true to the DIY ethic coupled with raspy, strong dual vocals sung in Tagalog makes this a tight outfit . Male and female vocals can be heard on both their demos or on the compilation released through Philippine labels, Dirty Shoes or Bulacan records, called *In The Name of Revolution*. Kadena is a band of political activists whose roots lie in the student protest groups that clashed with authorities during martial law and reach to the streets of New York and New Jersey against bigots and pro-war demonstrations. Contact Info: www.kadena-ny.com info@kadena-NY.com

Eskapo from the Bay Area/Vallejo Ca. scenes is a hardcore band described once as Stiff Little Fingers meets Los Crudos. As like the bands mentioned previously, their lyrics are also in Tagalog and English but the music is faster, shorter with vocals that are both gruff and melodic at the same time. Eskapo is a sextet, influenced by the Philippine Violators, WUDS and American hardcore punk.Eskapo has released a 15 song full length called Kalayaan (Liberation) on their own DIY label and is also featured on the Bulacan records comp, In The Name of Revolution. Contact Info: www.eskapo.com, eskapo@hotmail.com, Lawrence Fajardo 127 Missouri St. Vallejo, CA 94590

Flattbush is a four piece insane grind band from Los Angeles. Their music is frantic, urgent blasts of unrelenting noise with lyrics in Tagalog and Kapampangan (another nothern dialect).heavily influenced by both Chairman Mao, Mike Patton and Napalm Death, these guys are the soundtrack to Philippine brutality and the New People's Army, their full length *Smash The Octupus* was released on Koolarrow Records, Flattbush is constantly touring and is also featured on the compilation with Kadena and Eskapo.Check out their site, it's awesome! Contact Info: www.flattbush.com, info@flattbush.com, Koolarrow Records, 740 A 4th St. # 415, San Francisco CA 94117

Charmin from the Bay Area, is a four piece power punk pop group that takes influences from the Descendants and the political folk, punk band Yano from the Philippiines. The Gonzales brothers who formed Pinoisepop play guitar and drums for this band. Charmin sings in melodic verse of the diaspora of mistreated overseas contract workers, sending money and goods to loved ones back home and heartsick love songs.The now demolished Bindlestiff Studios in SF housed both the Pinoisepop festivals and bands like Charmin and Eskapo. Charmin have 2 demos and is featured on the 12" compilation *Fine Dining* with many bands from the festival. Contact Info: balikbayanbox@hotmail.com, schizo102.tripod.com/charmin

Lost In Amerika is a four piece, female fronted hardcore band from LA. LIA has ben described as Walls Of jericho meets Philippine hardcore with harsh, hard to listen to vocals and crushing grooves and breakdowns. They a have a five song demo out called *Cotabato Bombing* and will be available directly from them or at their shows. Contact Info: www.lostinamerika.net, lostinamerika04@yahoo.com

Sputterdoll from the Bay Area are a hardy bunch of scrappers who play melodic pop punk like Screaching Weasel with female vocals.The music is poppy but often times fast and the vocals and lyrics are both goofy and serious at the same time. Sputterdoll tours quite often and has a CD out called *Proceed without Caution* please contact them at www.sputterdoll.com sputterdoll@yahoo.com

Dogs Of Ire from Los Angeles is an intense, four piece who rage about imperialism and colonization in their songs, blistering post punk with various time changes and straight to the gut vocals screamed in tribal Tagalog, DOI is a hard touring band that hail from Riverside CA. Their full length is a masterpiece of revolutionary art because the cd booklet is placed in a zine type format with some interesting artwork, it is aptly titled *Reach For The Burning* and is out on their own DIY label.Contact info:www.dogsofire.com, Ethospine/Dogs Of Ire, PO Box 1611, Riverside CA. 92502, info@dogsofire.com

From Monuments To Masses from Oakland is an instrumental three piece who play a mesmerizing, eclectic blend of post punk, 90'shardcore, hip hop and awesome instrumental music. From Monuments To Masses have no vocals, sometimes they'll have speech samples from great political leaders over the beats or an occasional scream but for the most part their music is subtle and tense ferocity.All three are DIY dedicated activists in the community who occasionally put on shows at the 40th St. warehouse, they have two albums under their belt and are on Dim Mak records. Contact Info www.frommonumentstomasses.com, 379 40th St., Oakland, CA 94609

The Skyflakes from San Francisco appear syrupy sweet on the outside but don't let that fool you at first listen, their lyrics are spiteful, vengeful rants at the elite and snobby, backed by midtempo indie pop stylings and a tranquil feminine voice that conceals a hint of venom. Bindlestiff also housed this five piece and they were a staple at many Pinoisepop festivals. Contact Info: www.theskyflakes.com, skyflakes@theskyflakes.com, Ron Ramos ronnmann@hotmail.com

Wangbu is the newest band to this community and they are less than a few years old to this country but they play a youthful energetic metalcore influenced by newer bands from the Philippines like Slapshock and Cheese with contemplative lyrics in Tagalog and English. Wangbu is the Bisayan word for BU-Wang which means lunatic or mentally unsound. They are a five piece from Vallejo and Hercules. Contact Info www.wangbu.tk http://www.wangbu.tk/

The bands I have mentioned are the bands that have mostly participated in the Pinoisepop festivals or are in a way connected to the local punk or activist scene through my own band, Eskapo. The number of Pinoy bands playing original punk/indie in America or extreme music are very few and since benefit shows could not save Bindlestiff studios from being turned into a parking lot, Pinoisepop has lost a home and is searching for another venue affordable enough to host bands from across the country.

Most of the bands from here try to give a little back to our homeland, whether in exposure to their friends and fans here or in monetary form gained by selling benefit compilations featuring Filipino and Filipino-American bands like *In the name of Revolution*. I will list labels, bands and zines from the Philippines that have been corresponding with Fil-Am bands in most recent times.

The Pinoisepop website details the history of the festival, it's ties to the FIlipino -American arts and theater space, Bindlestiff, photos,interviews and information of all the bands that have played and participated to echo music and words in it's halls.

Contact Info: pinoisepop.cjb.net or c/o Augusto Gonzales, 865 Masonic Ave., San Francisco, CA 94117, pinoisepop@hotmail.com

Bulacan Records features bands from all over the islands but is based in Bulacan, a province in Luzon, the northern island. The Tartars (Socailist Oi!), Minority Blocks (NPA street punk from Cebu), Disabuse (Manila Grindcore), Fingerboarder (One man isanity of grind!) are all featured on their roster. Some of these bands only can afford demos but others have full lengths, all these bands have contact information and they can be accessed through the label. Contact Info: Bulacan Records, 62 Virgo St. San Felipe Subd., Malolos City, Bulacan, Philippines 3000, www.geocities.com/bulacan records, zernando@hotmail.com

Throw are Bulacan's old skool stalwarts, this straightforward HC assualt comes in four members who used to play in Private Stock and Dead Ends. I know they have released a full length on a DIY label but I'm unsure of how to get a hold of it. Contact Info: Bimboi throw@yahoo.com. www.throw-ph.com http://www.throw-ph.com/

xFEUDx comes to us from Cavite, Metro Manila,though they might have disbanded just recently, this phenomenal sXe hardcore band is youth crew to the fullest but thrashed up along with some of the most insightful, profound and well articulated lyrics I've ever heard both in Tagalog and English. Feud has a full length out on 625 records but it's a split release from many other labels across the world. Please write to

them or check them out and get *Battling Bastards of Freedom* on 625 in the States. Contact Info: Take 4 Collective (T4C), PO BOX 3900, CPO Manila 1000, Philippines

Shrapnel from Cebu city play fast, pounding hardcore using both new the school and old school.Shrapnel's website is put on hold at the moment to record a full length to be release through the punk collective SRA. Contact Info: www.shrapnel.S5.com

Piledriver is a five piece Laguna hardcore vein who plays hardcore in the Agnostic Front, Madball and other NYHC outfits kind of brutality.Some have called them street core but this five piece from Laguna, Philippines is dedicated to honouring their neighborhood and their people. Piledriver have three releases: a demo, a CDEP and featured on a comp with other laguna bands all on Railroad Records. Contact Info: www.geocities.com/lagunapiledriver, lgn_piledriver@hotmail.com

TSA from Bulacan is, from my understanding the band that formed before or during Throw because they feature members of said band and they were on hold for the moment due to Al and Bimboi's activities in Throw but please contact them anyway. Contact Info: bimboi throw@yahoo.com

Human Mastication is pulverizing Philippine grind waving the tattered bloody flag of Death metal from Davao city in the southern islands. A DIY band with one promo CDR and featured on two international death, grind and hc compilations, you should contact them at: www.human-mastication.cjb.net or human_mastication@yahoo.com Human Mastiaction c/o Ryan Gee, 133 Mutya St. Dona Paz Subdivision, Sasa, Davao City Philippines 8000

Condemned is a Davao City technical grindcore band with six intoxicated individuals fueled by Emperador. Six southern islander grindheads, two vocalists singing in low throat growls to high throat screams and a band influenced by E.N.T.,Terrorizer and Phobia.Condemed is in the process of recording a demo. Contact Info: www.grindcoreiscondemned.cjb.net

Lapida, another Davao City band, play brutal death metal extreme termination.Lapida's first demo CDR entitled *Absence of Isolation* is available from their website. Contact www.lapidabrutalmusic.tk

Mutilated Noise has been around since 1988 and is the longest running DIY hardcore and punk zine in the Philippines.They have interviews with local bands and foreign bands and cover a wide range of topics within their pages. *Mutilated Noise* 's site has a lot of links to other bands as well. mutilatednews.cjb.net, Mutilated News c/o Noel Francia, PO box 4527 M.C.P.O., 1285 Makati City Metro Manila, Philippines

Namatay Sa Ingay (Killed By Noise) is an online webzine that is written entirely in Tagalog and I believe there are no translations but this zine features a lot of Pinoy bands, HC and punk bands from Europe and the US. Contact Info: www.geocities.com/namataysaingay, namataysaingay@yahoo.com

Slackerbooger is a DIY publication based in the Philippines and has a peculiar name with a good heart. The coverage ranges from pictures of local shows or interviews with US thrash, HC and pop punk acts. Dane Cortez runs the zine and has written to many bands here in the US and continues to support the scene. slackerbooger@mail.com

Sullen Seed Projekt is a ko-operative, label, distro, zine and only active distributor of any kind of punk or subculture noise in the southern philippine islands of Mindanao. Von Amon is our contact through this zine since he came and visited the US a couple of years back. *Sullen Seed Projekt* has written Davao/Philippine scene reports in all sorts of foreign zines to raise conciousnes about their political and enviormental struggle. Contact Info: Von Amon, sullenseed@hotmail.com, 10th Ave., B-4 L-31 Fortune Hms.., Lanang Davao City 8000, Philippines. www.sullenseed.fateback.com

Railroad Records from Laguna is a "basement operation D.I.Y distro and label" hosting on their roster Northern Luzon's heaviest hardcore hitters, Piledriver, Defiant, Ammunition, Limitbreak (Baguio City), Decay and My Last stand. Contact Info: Railroad Records c/o Howell A.Casacop B-3 L-35 Ambrocia Village 4026 Sanat Rosa Laguna Philippines railroadrecords@hotmail.com

Middle Finger Production is an independant label based out of Illnois, formed by Randy from such bands as Drain Brain, No Pressure and Bad Omen in the Philippines.Aside from playing music back home, he was also a particpant in the BataanRural Decay scene, a homegrown collective.
Contact him at middle fingerus@yahoo.com

I attempted to compile this scene report of sorts to share with the rest of the punk community the bands and people that are from my homeland and from my community here in the US. The majority of these bands seem very genre-oriented or very similar to other bands in the States and that is because the Philippines is the most westernized country in Asia and as with mediocre pop, underground music also crept into the hungry ears of the youth. I hope that through this scene report whoever may see it, if you appreciate this culture or music ,please feel free to drop any of these bands, distros or labels a letter or line.

Over eight million Filipinos are displaced by their diaspora across the globe because of the conditions of political turmoil, poverty and corporate exploitation that has plagued the Philippines for years.Many would say that there is no future to be found in such an impoverished country and that we must immigrate elsewhere but in truth, our travels as a people extend our identity to other cultures, sharing with the rest of the world, our music, our language and our pride.

ESKAPO

RUSSIA

Northwest Hardcore Fest
St. Petersburg, Russia - May 18-19, 2004

Oh come all ye faithful. Despite the pompous name, NWHC fest has been an intimate, homely event, six bands spread over two days played to a few dozen kids in a Cold War era bomb shelter that was turned into a music club called "Deep Sound". It was supposed to feature two more bands, Potom Budet Pozdno and Svinokop, but they cancelled after the bassist they share with Zgibov got poisoning.

The club's film projectionist Misha had eaten something bad too and so both films that Epicenter Info shop was showing before the gigs had to be crammed before Wednesday's show. The movies were documentaries on McLibel trial and Critical Mass movement (St. Petersburg's first Critical Mass had taken place just on May 15th). Oh, Epicenter is an anarchist-run info shop in St. Petersburg that the festival was a benefit for. All in all, 1.000 rubles have been donated, plus some papers, books and tapes were sold at gigs. More information about Epicenter can be found at www.infoshop.spb.ru website.

The purpose of the festival was to bring together most if not all-underground hardcore bands from Russia's Northwest region. The bands were from various parts of St. Petersburg and Leningrad region.

On Tuesday, May 18th the show was kicked off by Kronstadt based Engage At Will who are a new band playing competent, tough-sounding old school HC with personal and social lyrics in Russian (except when they covered Agnostic Front). Two of the members, bassist Denis and drummer Oleg, have previously been in Till I Die, St. Petersburg's premiere HC combo. Engage At Will has a seven-song demo available (online version is at www.olaalexandrova.com/eaw). St. Petersburg's Distress played beat by the book, the rhythms, the riffs, the sound, the lyrics, except they're in Russian. They played a bunch of covers too, songs by Varukers, Chimera, Anti-Climax, Exploited and Vibrator. On the latter's "Yankee Go Home" (dodgy, "anti-PC" song) they were joined by Danya Vibrator himself. Distress is available at totalpunk@hotbox.ru. Finally, Pushkin-based For The Cause finished the gig off with a brilliant set of speedy, screaming and tight HC that is sort of influenced by modern "old school" and modern thrash. They were mostly silent between the songs, letting the music do the talking. Like all other bands (whatever the names may imply), they sang in Russian. For The Cause can be reached at inuse82@yandex.ru.

As was mentioned before, the second day has started with films, with East St. Petersburg's 8 Hz coming in close second. They played a raging set of brutal, metal- and grind-influenced hardcore with political lyrics. They were trading instruments all of the time, and a few songs (of more traditional HC variety) featured their non-salaried singer Shera, perhaps his last appearance with 8 Hz. The band can be contacted at xkrusayderx@mail.ru. Svin'i V Kosmose was next, they are from Vyborg and are the oldest (and thus the tightest) band of all taking part, and they started playing in 1998, when they were just 13 years old! They played great, totally energetic, chaotic and powerful set, thankfully relying mostly on older, more HC-sounding material (some of the newer songs are more metal). One of the songs was a Chimera cover. Svin'i V Kosmose website is at www.cbk.nm.ru/band.htm. The last band was Sandinista! from St. Petersburg (they share the drummer, Ivan, with For The Cause). I'd call their music new school HC; it combines dark, brooding power, intense mid-tempo rhythms, ebullient guitars and desperate vocals (sociopolitical lyrics too). The latter were absent from the composition they closed they're set that had no vocals yet. A hit in the making, anyone. Sandinista! have been lucky to inspire the most dancing, they can be contacted at uliaoberts@hotbox.ru.

That's pretty much it, feel free to get in touch at diyhc@yahoo.com or at Dmitrij Ivanov, PO Box 30, St. Petersburg-9, 195009, Russia or check out www.svinokop.narod.ru (Szss label / Knives N Forks zine). Thanks for paying attention. Sharapov.

SVIN'I V KOSMOSE

DISTRESS

SANDINISTA!

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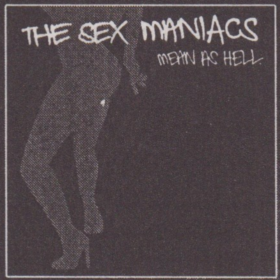

THE SEX MANIACS

Mean As Hell

The debut full length from these hellraising hellchilds from Yorkshire. Combining the sleaze of the DWARVES, the spirit of MOTORHEAD, the bad attitude of BLACK FLAG, some riffs stolen from AC/DC,and washing it down with a fifth of well whiskey, the SEX MANIACS' dirty up your stereo with the kind of music that your mother warned you about. Raw, rauchy, bar room brawl rock 'n' roll with a vicious hardcore bite.

FULL SPEED AHEAD

Born To Lose

Recorded almost four years ago, Full Speed Ahead's swansong "Born To Lose" has been sitting on the shelves due to artwork complications and the band's untimely breakup. With a new piece by none other than Pushead in hand, this scorcher is ready to rip. FSA combine the anger and intensity of hardcore stalwarts BLACK FLAG and NEGATIVE APPROACH with the skate punk energy of bands such as JFA and THE BIG BOYS. This is one for the history books.

CDs are $10 ppd in the US or available from the best independent stores and distributors. International customers check out the website for ordering info. In 2004 expect new releases from: CLOCKCLEANER, ANNIHILATION TIME, COLD SWEAT, JED WHITEY, THE SEX MANIACS, COLISEUM, THE PROWL, WOUND UP and more. Current releases from: BORN DEAD ICONS, TEAR IT UP, ANNIHILATION TIME, THE PROWL, THE RITES, THINK I CARE, and R'N'R still available.

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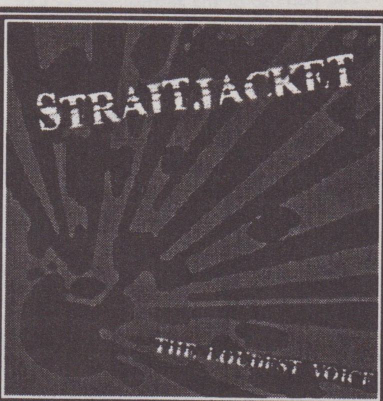

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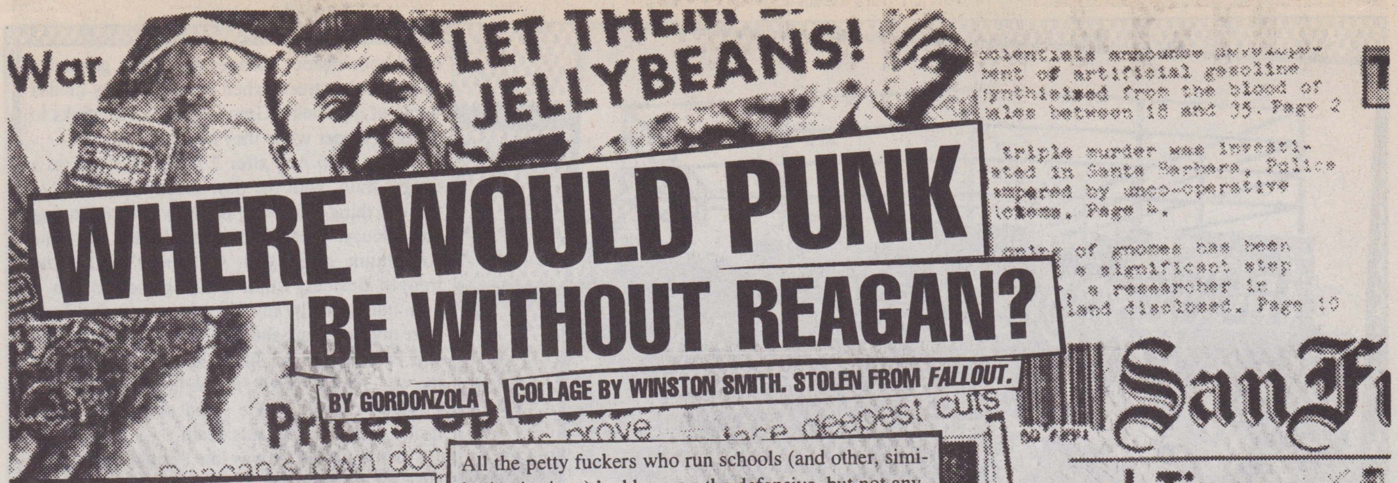
PELADO RECORDS



WHERE WOULD PUNK BE WITHOUT REAGAN?

BY GORDONZOLA

COLLAGE BY WINSTON SMITH. STOLEN FROM *FALLOUT*.

What fueled a lot of punk in the early 80s was the disconnection to reality that Reagan represented. It was like that Rowdy Roddy Piper movie *They Live*. All around, people were seeing a kindly old man speak friendly common sense. Many of us, who instead saw a horrible monster who wanted to kill us in World War Three, banded together in the punk community.

Reagan was a cultural revolutionary above all else. There was no mistaking this if you were growing up at that time. Sure, there were specific policies he wanted to enact, certain unions he wanted to bust, certain people who he wanted to bomb or have murdered, but his real power came from getting Americans to feel good about their greed and imperialism again.

I turned 13 in October 1980. Three weeks later Ronald Reagan got elected president. There was a phrase I heard used over and over again during the next few years which one doesn't hear much today: the pendulum theory. It's not much of a theory. It just says that politics, like a pendulum, go one direction until natural forces kick in and they are forced to go the other. Even as a young teen I understood this to be incredibly stupid, nothing more than a rationalization. As micro example of this: The year I got into high school (1981) my formally sorta groovy Northern California high school began eliminating elective classes, got rid of free periods, began detention for absences, and began ringing buzzers for the first time since the fifties to announce the end/beginning of classes. The particulars of these things is less important than the fact to a certain type of social control was being re-implemented. All the petty fuckers who run schools (and other, similar institutions) had been on the defensive, but not anymore. They wanted their power back. Sit down. Shut up. There will be no more questions.

Reagan led a right wing offensive whose goal was to make (among many other things) respect for authority fashionable again. Many of us in the punk scene became politicized in that era in the face of a mass movement going in the other direction. This of course directly affected our politics and organizing techniques. Through Rock Against Reagan, War Chest Tours, the anti-Pope protests and the anti-nuke movement, we became very good at loudly and flamboyantly saying "NO!"

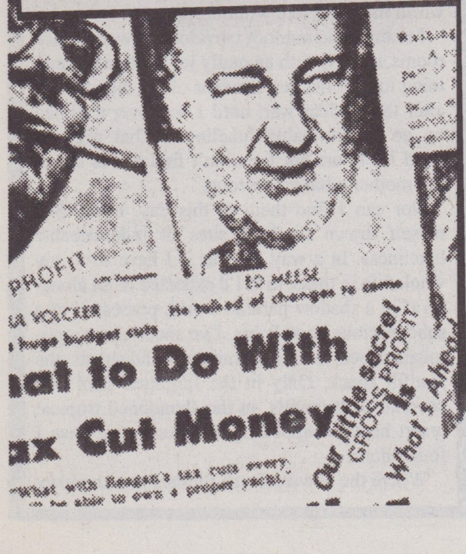
So many bands had anti-Reagan songs that it became a cliché. Dead Kennedys came close to acknowledging that the 70s got a bum rap in a lot of early punk when they changed the identity of who would start the American concentration camps from Jerry Brown to Ronald Reagan in "We've Got a Bigger Problem Now." There were all sorts of anti-Reagan songs. It was not a time for subtlety so most were of the "We are Reagan Youth, Seig Heil!" (Reagan Youth) or "My eyes have seen the horror of the coming of the Lord / His name is Ronald Reagan and he's drafting all young boys / as they die to he will put you in your grave / his conquest marches on" (The Fartz) variety. Some were humorous though, "Hinckley Had A Vision" (The Crucifucks) and "If Reagan played disco, he'd shoot it to shit / You can't disco in jack boots" (The Minutemen). The thing was, that almost every band had at least one because it was unified us. Even as we laughed at the unoriginality of it, living in the time of Reagan fueled some of American punk's greatest moments. It defines the time just as much as strong regional scenes, being attacked by jocks/rednecks/metal kids, and writing lyrics on Converse sneakers.

Even bands that didn't want to be considered hardcore* had to react. The Pop O Pies for example, always maintained that they were punk, not hardcore, at a time when those two were mostly synonymous. Their parody of the hardcore anti-Reagan song, just shows how mandatory the anti-Reagan song was to a hardcore punk identity. "Political Song" contained only a few lyrics, but it summed up, and mocked, that era's songs: "1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4. / We don't want your apathy./ No fuckin' government gets down on me./ Can spare any change? /Can spare any change? / Anti Reagan and stuff man, yeah.".

One thing that is under-acknowledged from this period is that fact that though many people came in and out of the punk scene, it was a home and place of politicization for kids at a time when they needed it most. Not that it worked for everyone, but the punk scene gave many of us hope that there were others like us, who didn't believe the lies we were being told on a daily basis, that didn't support the re-militarization of America, that didn't believe in Armageddon or the Moral Majority as positive things. The political punk scene helped spawn an anarchist community, which in turn helped connect and train a generation of activists. Whether or not those people, myself included, identify as punk or anarchist in 2004, you can find us in almost every political movement that is active today. Reagan's cultural revolution, while doing massive damage that is continuing today, also spawned the beginnings of the re-emergence of radical domestic opposition to America's world dominance, which had mostly died off by the time he was elected.

Remember kids, punk's not dead, but Reagan is.

*Not that I have the space to hash this out here but… I'm using hardcore in the 80s sense that would include bands like DOA, Black Flag, Reagan Youth, anything on an *MRR* comp, or pretty much any band with a three initial name, etc.. While this was a time of "generic" *MRR* punk and the re-inscription of straight male dominance in the punk scene, it also produced some amazing music scenes and bands. I am *not* using "hardcore" to mean the bad emo that claims that title today.



THE GREAT UNREMEMBERING...

The rolling river, the wide open West, the dusty boxcar dawn. The faces of men in newsreels, the hopeful faces of the men who went West. Flickering black and white, silent movies of the men who hopped the trains and flopped in the flops, their open, hopeful faces recorded for all history. The newsreels that play even now, everywhere and nowhere, the images still traveling through space, years after broadcast.

Nostalgia and amnesia; the crack of the bat.

Summer breeze and the smell of peanuts in the stands as the shortstop, a local boy, cleanly fields the hard hit grounder. Reagan's voice, calling the plays on long, lost radio afternoons, following the action from Chicago by telegraph.

Reagan was all this and even less when he went west. It was sunny California that gave Reagan his stature.

Here was Golden California, the land waiting for the brave settlers who roamed ever west over the dusty plains and the treacherous snowy Sierras, to find gold in the rivers, and mighty redwoods to fell. And here was where the former "B" actor turned governor gave the orders to roll the tanks down Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley to take People's Park back by force and give it back to the chancellors and regents of the University of California, the settlers sons.

When Ed Meese gave the orders that day in Berkeley to the sheriffs to change from bird to buckshot, James Rector, a protester, was killed. With this, Reagan's optimistic grin became the sinister provocation that would later fuel a generation's punk scene. Murder, smiling murder, was what made Reagan into REAGAN.

On the morning after Reagan died, a dirty sun hung low, like a surveillance camera over West Capitol Avenue. Tweakers on BMX bikes and police in sleek, new, black and white cruisers circled each other in front of exhausted 1950's motor courts, as if the sons of Tom Joad, beaten all the way west, had run out of room, and had to endlessly circle, while the white dome of the Capitol loomed improbably over the scene, a mile away.

"Give me men to match my mountains" were the words carved into California's capitol. Reagan, somehow, had absorbed this, too, into his myth. The dirt poor and underfed, the hungry and haunted that roamed the dusty Depression highways, were transformed by Reagan's grin from something tragic into a symbol, the very spirit of American Optimism.

The capitol grounds in Sacramento grow green out of the dusty Central Valley, a fairgrounds, watered cool in July, where every kind of tree that grows within California's expansive borders are kept. Date palms, sequoias, orange trees, branches hung low with fruit - all are kept, year round.

But optimism, cruelly, is seasonal. Is it optimism in the late spring breeze that drives the underdogs today? From Oxnard to Watsonville to Salinas, along a fools gold road, to stoop in the fields all day to pick strawberries.

While the dirty sun hangs low.

On the morning after Reagan's death, our boxcar groaned to a stop in West Sacramento after dawn, just before the train bridge over the Sacramento River. It was Sunday morning and felt damn like it as Melissa and I got off the train and started to walk towards the capitol, into town. On West Capitol Avenue, we passed a Sacramento Bee newspaper box. The Sunday morning headline: "Goodbye Gipper."

And somewhere, unseen, our train had now started again and was rolling surely along without us, the sound of the steel wheels on the train bridge now the only sound in the quiet morning.

I dropped all my stuff in disbelief and both of us just stood there, open mouthed. I hadn't been able to imagine a life without Reagan and then he died, just like that, like anyone else.

When I was a teenager, I probably would have killed myself if I hadn't been driven, deep down, by the simple urge to live to see Reagan and my stepfather die. Now Reagan was dead and I was surprised at how complex my feelings were about it.

A couple years ago, in a letter to this very magazine, written on Reagan's 91st birthday, I had advocated spontaneous parades and punk generator shows in the streets when Reagan finally died. I wrote of my friend, Greg's open call to punks to shotgun a beer when they heard the news.

But, at 7:00 AM after 2 hours of sleep on a freight train, with the day already hot and dry, the last thing I felt like doing was shotgunning some lousy, cheap beer (And Jimmy says the Aluminum gives you Alzheimer's. Oh, the irony!). Besides, I quit drinking months ago. I even quit going by my old name, Iggy, that I got after my first punk show back when Reagan was still President. I felt like a soldier, getting over the war. Try as I might, and to my great surprise, I couldn't find a single shred of joy anywhere inside of me at Reagan's death.

I just felt relief. It was like I could see myself alive for the first time. Reagan had convinced me there was "no future", and here I was standing in it.

As our train, unseen, rolled across the river without us.

In ruins and rubble, the abandoned factories and railyards on the edges of towns, the newsreels still flicker. In a nether world of shadowy decay, I feel the eery fascination of uncovering a subconscious knowledge. Here, I sense the shadow logic of the CIA death squad, the shallow grave; the heartless algebra of the arms race. Not a secret history, but a secret future; inevitable, with its own tight, inner logic.

Again and again, I return to these burned out abandoned areas in cities, as if haunted by a still unfought war. In the trainless train station ,in the rotten wharf, I explore the ruins of Reagan's optimistic future. Here, in the graffiti cathedral where the weeds grow through the road lie the dead cities of the nuclear war that Reagan expected to fight and win if necessary.

In these punk rock drinking spots, I feel the long familiar tingle of the spine that I still sometimes associate with the pressure drop before a thunderstorm back home in Florida. One of my most vivid childhood memories is of after a thunderstorm on a day in 1983 when I was 10 when there was no school. I had not seen the TV movie *The Day After* yet, I am sure, because it came out in 1984. Nevertheless, I anticipated its plot, even then.

I remember riding my bike around my neighborhood on the eery, vacant, wet streets and starting to panic. Then I remember going to my school, which stood open, and unfenced, but completely empty for the holiday. I was shocked by the silence in the usually noisy halls. It was perhaps the first time I had thought of what the world might be like without me in it.

I roamed the outdoor corridors between classrooms, slowly, with an oddly joyful dread, imagining myself the last survivor of the human race after the nuclear war, until I was overwhelmed by an indescribable loneliness. That night, I cried for hours but I couldn't find words to tell my mother what was wrong.

Nor can I find them to this day. I still find myself drawn to these sites of indescribable loneliness. In a way, it is as if I have lived my whole life in them, as if I'd expected to all along. As if in a shadow parallel world, possessed of a subconscious knowledge, I've snuck down optimistic streets to find the railyards and squats; the landfill shack. Only in the forgotten pool hall covered with murals, in the abandoned tropical resort hotel, whipped by thunderstorms, have I found home.

Where the newsreel still flickers in a shadowy

half light.

I realized my relief at Reagan's death came from being glad to have simply outlived him. I had always had some deep fear that I would be hit by a bus or something and my last words would be, "Reagan... Still... (gasp) LIVES!" When I was younger, it felt like a big deal to simply survive. But over time I realized that outliving Reagan was the only chance I had to one day be part of the movement that would rewrite the lies of Reagan's history and change the very ending.

But, also, I think my relief now came from realizing that by the time Reagan had actually died, my teenage rage had quit being the motivating factor in my life. These days, as much as I, say, wish I could shit on Bush's lip every morning for a thousand years, what keeps me going is the sense of what I wish the world actually looked like, and the times that me and my friends have come together to create truly beautiful things, things that life would be so awful and unlivable without.

I almost shotgunned a beer when Reagan died, anyway, as little as I wanted to, but Melissa argued with me about it. She said, "Here you are complaining about not wanting to be forced to do things out of an obligation to tradition and now you're going to drink a beer you don't even want because you think you're *supposed* to!" She was right. Reagan's death had brought up a whole lot of contradictions I'd Been struggling with lately. What did it mean to live everyday for years like the world would end tomorrow, but somehow survive it all and be GLAD?

Hearing reports of friends ^ most of them too young to actually remember Reagan ^ drinking all day in honor of Reagan's death made me slightly proud and depressed at the same time. Its great that there are kids around who have enough of a sense of humor to party when someone *dies*, but is Reagan just another Greatest Hits record, now 20 years detached from the urgency of its original context? It made me proud of punk tradition, but highlighted my own frustration with punk's determination to pretend, at all costs, that nothing ever changes.

Its like the discussion Arwen and I had about the search for a new MRR coordinator. The irony is that if MRR hired coordinators that actually live the old school punk life it celebrates, there would be no magazine at all.

Finally, to say goodbye to Ronnie my own way, I took to the streets with Joey Alone to blanket SF with graffiti to correct Reagan's legacy. I started with some simple "Fuck Reagan!"'s for old time sakes and warmed up to "So long and thanks for the homelessness, Ronnie!", and "Punks not dead, but Reagan is!"

The post office had a sign that said, "In memoryof Ronald Reagan, the post office will be closed on Friday June 11", so I wrote, "In memory of Ronald
Reagan, there will be AIDS, crack in the ghettos, and missiles in space forever!"

My favorite was "Death = Silence! Good riddance, Ronnie!"

Reagan left nothing to chance. His burial alone had a 500 page script. He was to be put in the ground at just the right moment, the Golden California sunset as the backdrop.

Thinking of Reagan's scripted ending, I couldn't help but think of what it means to have a scripted ending. I thought of Kurt Cobain and his rifle, or slightly less scripted ends. Darby Crash. Matty Luv. What was the fucking legacy of *that*? And how did we inherit it? What does it mean to live in the ruins so long that you come to think its all you deserve?

As the mourners filed past Reagan's coffin on live TV, though, I just wished I could be there to spit on it. It would be worth it to ride freight trains the whole way there, the great western migration in reverse, to arrive filthy and penniless before the Great Man, and give one great spit on live TV. For James Rector. For Will Shatter and D. Boon. For the nameless in the shallow graves in El Salvador. "This is for El Mozote!" I'd yell, as they dragged me off.

But is there really anything to celebrate when a 93 year old invalid passes away in peace on the splendor of his Southern California ranch? Lately I've been reading about apartheid in South Africa, about the vast network of secret torture and state terror that sustained apartheid and how the government managed to keep it covered-up for much of the most brutal, final 30 years. The fascinating thing is that now the truth is known and everyone acknowledges that former presidents of South Africa were bloodthirsty murderers, personally ordering midnight killings and disappearances. What would it take to rewrite the ending here in the US, so that we can finally call everything by its right name?

But Reagan's death was his crowning act, completing the Great Unremembering. Indeed, over the years, it had seemed that as Reagan, the man, drifted towards complete senility, the nation drifted with him into the casual fantasy world of his presidency. Reagan's thoughts at the end must have been truly lighter than air, his clouded mind completely embodying a curious mixture of nostalgia and amnesia. His folksy optimism was now, as always, light years ahead of its time, traveling through the outer solar system, alongside every image ever broadcast, in a blurry netherworld where catsup is still a vegetable and trees cause pollution and the U.S. victims of Russia's nuclear attack perpetually face *The Day After*. Reagan's ideas are out there, still, long after
his death, waiting to be received. In the ruins and rubbles, in the flickering newsreel they live on. Truths that simply haven't come true yet.

We have forgotten where we put the loandmines. We have forgotten where we dug the shallow graves.

But that was Reagan's optimism. He always had a smile and a shrug for the sons of Tom Joad.

While Ed Meese ordered the sheriffs to change from birdshot to buck.

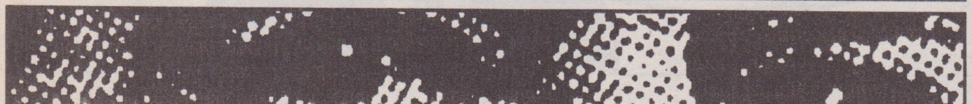
—Eirck Lyle

Contra Consta Times had the best headline. You could see it from clear across the street. Instead of "Nation Mourns its 40th President Blah blah blah... They simply had in three-inch high letters "REAGAN'S DEAD." I dashed across the street to buy it and then danced with glee up and down 24th Street in San Francisco. People looked more puzzled than amused but nobody got angry or anything.

I took the paper into a recording studio that night to use it for inspiration as I overdubbed vocals for the new album I'm making with the Melvins. I brought it in the next night too as I cut the vocals for "The Lighter Side of Global Terrorism." On the other hand I also began flicking off and even spitting at the TV when people were going on and on about how sad it was that he died. He was an old man for Christ's sake and while he was alive he fucked over millions and millions of people deliberately. It's not as though he didn't realize he was some actor hired to play the President while The Great Swindle went on. I wish more people remembered that there were hardly any homeless people on the streets out here until Reagan got into office. If only Americans weren't quite such a race of self-centered, greedy, violent bigots like people are encouraged to be today. Corporate buy outs of the networks of the news started happening under Reagan. It just goes on and on.

So to paper all of that over they're already making noise in Congress about putting his face on the ten dollar bill. Also expect a renewed push to put his face on Mount Rushmore. Some big right wing neo cons like Guy Vanderjagt, Vin Weber and Grover Norquist (who tends to get what he wants in Washington) have been pushing for Reagan on Rushmore for years. I think it was Vanderjagt who even said, "Hey there's a space over on the side where there's forest on top and that could be his hair." And he was serious. But wouldn't it be fitting justice if Bush awarded the Rushmore contract to Halliburton and they fucked it up so bad the whole mountain collapsed and they had to give it back to the natives?

—Jello Biafra



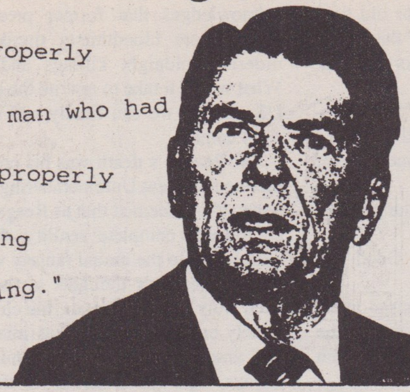
"Bye Bye Ronnie..." When I wrote that I had hoped that he was not long for this world and as it turned out he just kept going and going ...twenty years past when I wrote it, inspired by his frequent afternoon naps during cabinet meetings. All these eulogies is more than a bit much . Even NPR Radio trying to be even handed has gone too far being nice to that grinning bastard who started this new conservative revolution that now plagues us. A society that neglects its young and scorns its poor . Where more money is spent on prisons than education. Given the "new right "the balls to march us around the world to teach people democracy out of the barrel of a gun. Well Millions of Dead Cops hopes to see you this year and we promise to play "Bye Bye Ronnie" every night of the tour. Sad to hear about the death of Ray Charles wasn't it. His version of "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" is quite beautiful. Bye and we'll see you soon.

—David Dictor

A CUT-N-PASTE HISTORY OF

RONALD REAGAN

Or,
"How to properly remember a man who had trouble properly remembering anything."



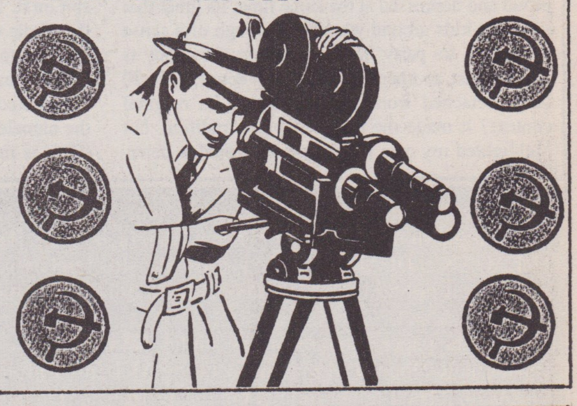
By Lane Van Ham

Reagan was born in 1911 in a small town in Illinois. In 1932, he graduated from college and found work as a radio announcer.

Reagan's duties as a commentator for Chicago Cubs baseball games proved prophetic of his presidency: Reagan was not actually calling the games live, but reading telegraphed updates and re-creating them *as if* he were actually there. This experience at melding fact with fiction would later become a cornerstone of his time in the Oval Office.

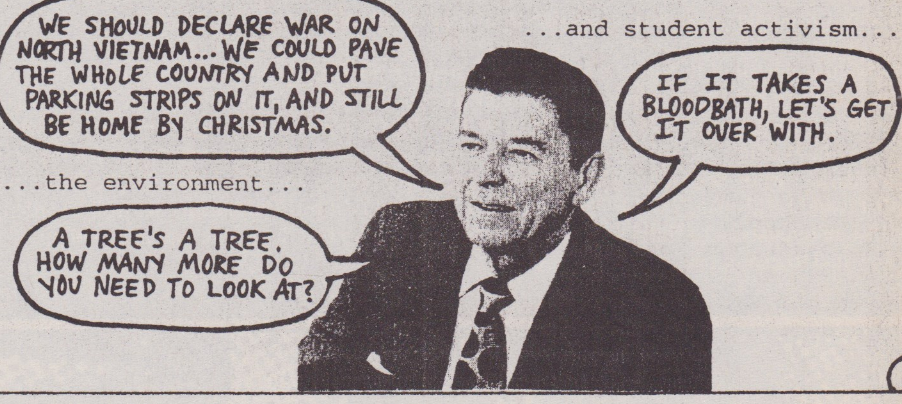
From radio, Reagan moved on to movies, where he had steady work as an actor for many years. Reagan almost always played stereotypical "good guys": the District Attorney, the soldier, the US Marshal, etc., though he may have been best known for his role as football player George "The Gipper" Gipp, in *Knute Rockne, All American*. (Over time, in fact, Reagan himself became known as "The Gipper.")

The way Reagan really distinguished himself as an actor, though, was by collaborating with the Red Scare in Hollywood. In 1947 he appeared to stand up to a Congressional committee by refusing to provide names of Communist actors--but in fact he had already turned over such names as an informer for the FBI.

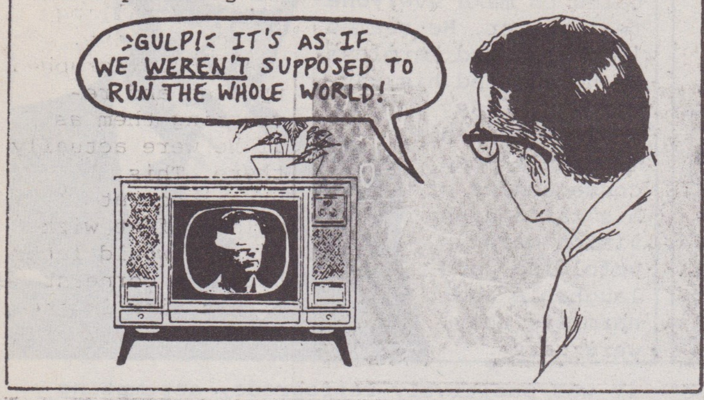


Here, Reagan began to pivot from show business to politics. Throughout the '50s, Reagan remained a self-identified "liberal," but as his personal fortune increased and he began to have wealthier friends, his beliefs took a sharp turn to the right. This reached a kind of absurd apex in the early '60s, when Reagan endorsed not only Nixon against Kennedy in 1960, but also Goldwater against Johnson in 1964.

After switching his party affiliation to Republican, Reagan won the governorship of California in 1966 and went on to hold the position for two terms. During this time he became notorious for his flamboyant quotability. Here's Governor Reagan on foreign policy...

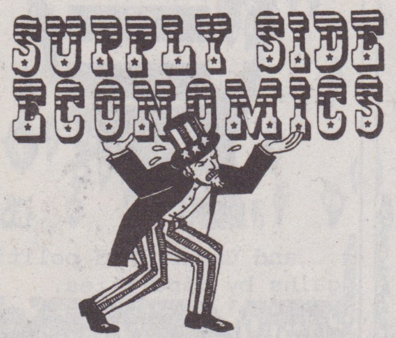


Reagan set his sight on the White House in the '70s, a decade that saw Watergate, the US pullout from Vietnam, the energy crisis, rising inflation, a stagnant economy, and the taking of US hostages in Iran. To a country used to thinking of itself as virtuous, these were depressing realities.

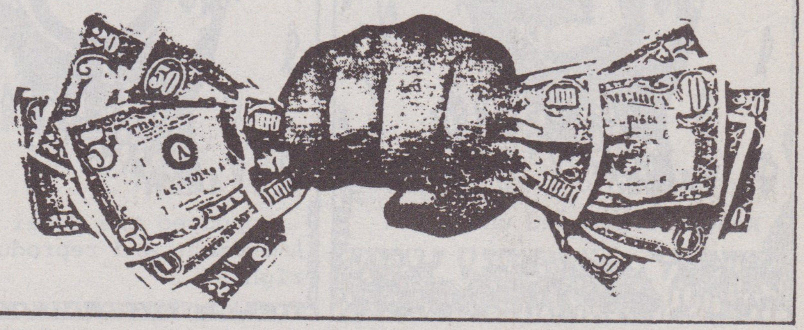


Reagan's answer was to tell people just what they wanted to hear: as Americans, we were to talk tough, walk tall, and everything would be OK. The formula worked: in 1980, Reagan won the Republican nomination and beat Jimmy Carter to become the 40th President of the United States.

In 1983 it was revealed that the victory was accomplished in part by preparing for the presidential debate with stolen material on Carter's strategy, but by then, the "Reagan Revolution" was in full effect. This included the radical theory of



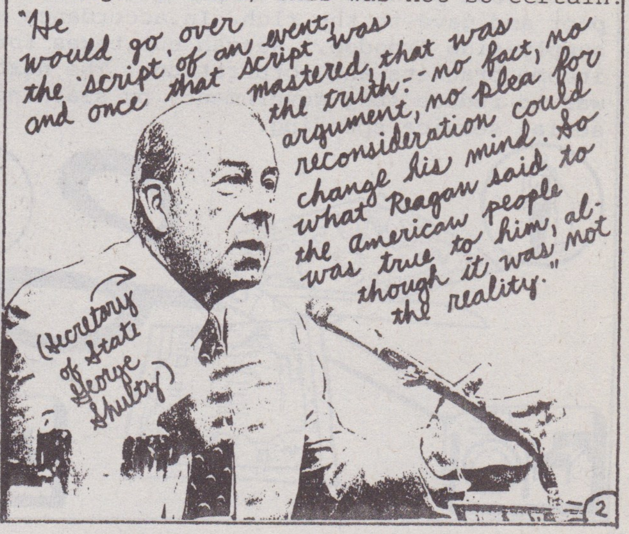
Supply-side economics inverted conventional economic wisdom, which said the best way to stimulate economic growth was to focus on bolstering consumer spending power (i.e. "demand"). But "Reaganomics" (as it was known), claimed that economic growth could be achieved by focusing on production. In other words, lowering taxes for businesses would make them more profitable, and the ensuing economic prosperity would benefit everybody equally.



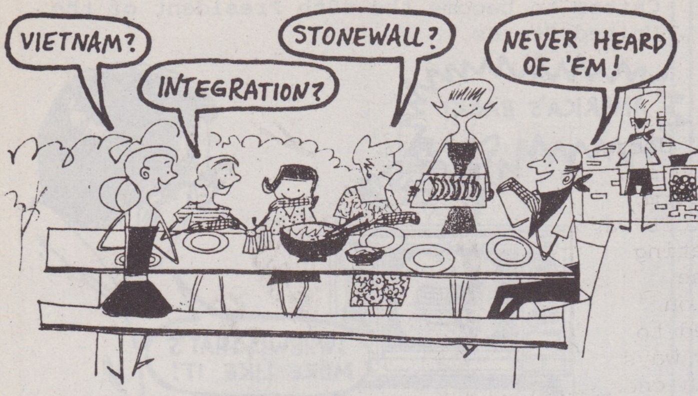
The theory was widely recognized as a complete hoax, even by others on the right. (As a candidate during the Republican primaries, George Bush famously referred to the scheme as "voodoo economics"--though he jumped on the supply-side bandwagon when Reagan named him Vice-President.)

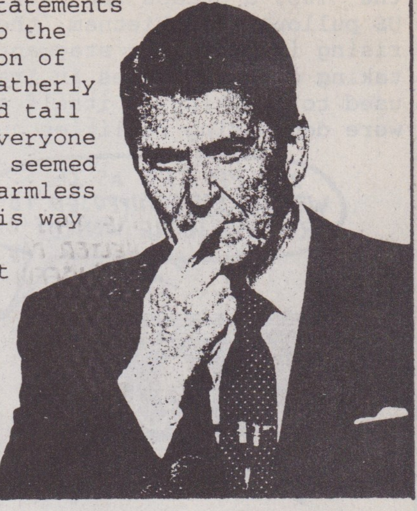
This wasn't the only area where the "Revolution" encountered problems. Among the biggest was the man allegedly at its command. It seemed that whenever Reagan had a microphone in front of him, he got the facts wrong.

Among most walks of humanity, such behavior would be considered lying. Yet in Reagan's case, this was not so certain.



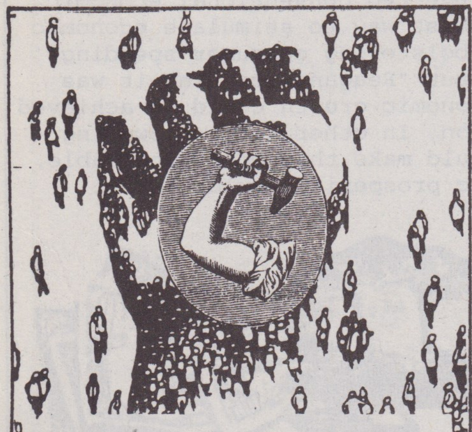
These acts of denial were in some sense a prescription for the nation as a whole. Reagan's version of America was like an old '50s cartoon, where everyone was one big, happy, homogenous family--white, straight, and living in suburbia.





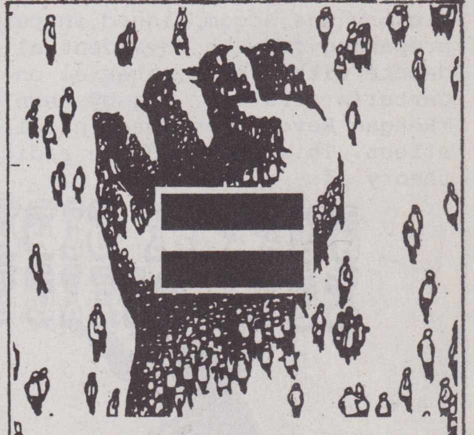
Yet Reagan's inability to master details actually contributed to his popularity. Occasional misstatements just played into the public perception of him as a grandfatherly charmer who told tall tales to make everyone feel better. He seemed laughable and harmless as he fumbled his way through press conferences, but meanwhile, the consequences of his cartoonish vision were unfolding, and laughable and harmless they were not.

The new administration was not just "conservative"--it was positively retrograde, attempting to roll back virtually every gain made by popular movements over the previous half-century.



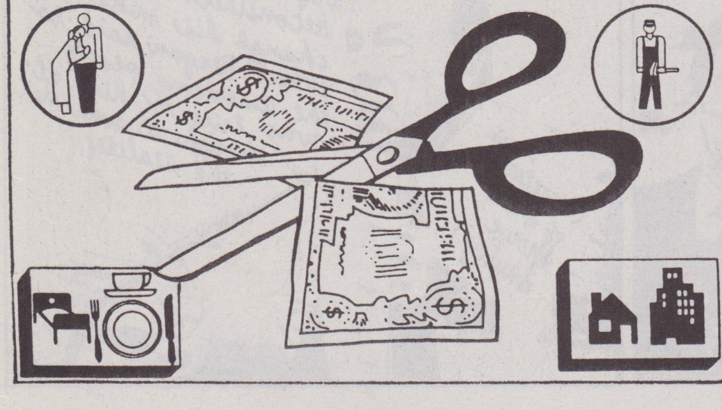
Reagan repressed unions...

...opposed the Equal Rights Amendment and reproductive rights...

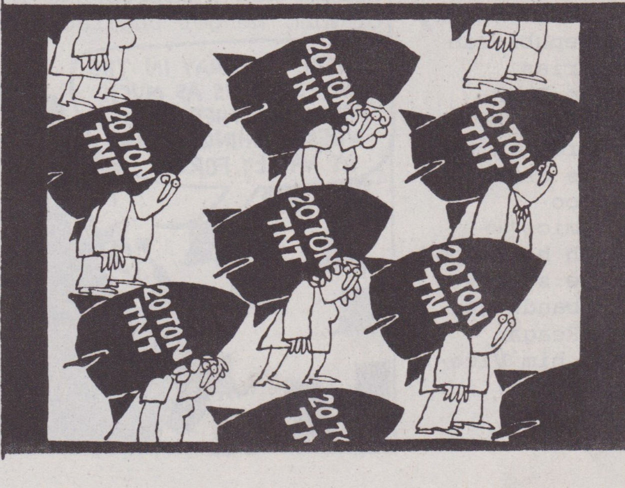


...and undermined political gains by minorities.

Reaganomics, in turn, was little more than a frontal assault on the already defenseless--a Robin Hood plan in reverse that took from the poor and gave to the rich. In accordance with supply-side "voodoo," Reagan cut taxes for upper income brackets and corporations. The next step was to reduce "big government" by slashing social service spending.

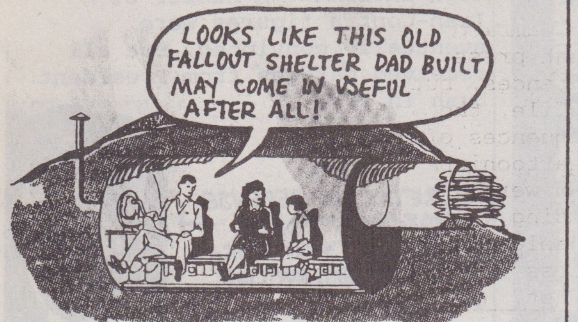


But Reagan's commitment to ending "big government" applied only to the safety net. When it came to repressive, violent functions, big government was something Reagan couldn't get enough of.



graphic: Len Munnik

His 1980 campaign claimed the United States had fallen behind the USSR in the nuclear arms race (even though neither he, nor any military official ever said they would prefer the Soviet arsenal to their own). Thus, as social spending contracted, there was always enough money for new weapons programs.

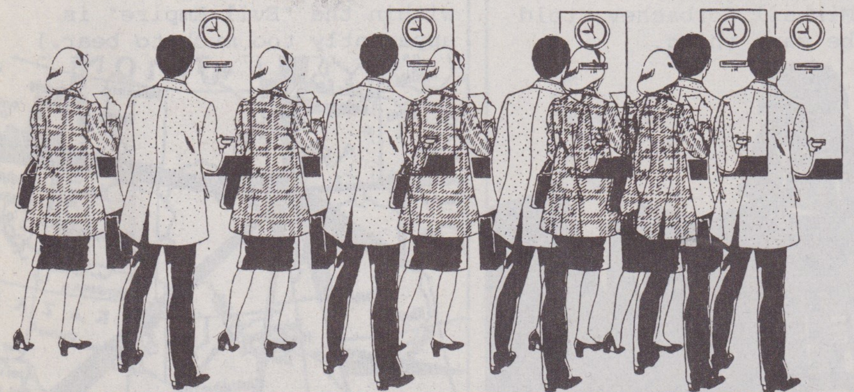


As a result, the country plunged into recession in 1981-2, while massive outlays for militarization were provided by a rising national debt. By Reagan's second term, the deficit was skyrocketing while the population struggled to find new ways of making ends meet.

One joke of the time went:
Q: What do McDonalds and the White House have in common?

But actually, the connection was even closer than that...

Throughout the '80s, higher-paying (often unionized) manufacturing jobs were lost, while the service industry expanded: one study found that nine of the ten new jobs created in the Reagan "recovery" paid less that $14,000 a year. While the ultra-rich partied, the average person started working more jobs, for longer hours, for less pay.



Globally, Reagan assumed a tough-talking cowboy persona and turned international relations into a Hollywood fantasy where Uncle Sam upheld law and order against the Evil Empire.

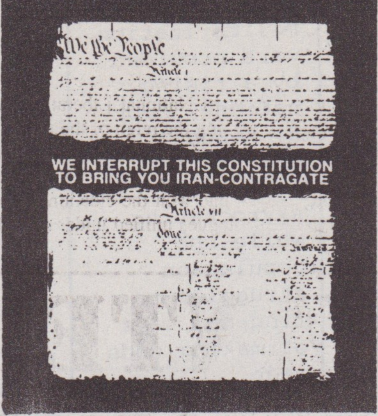
The reality was somewhat different. In Nicaragua, where a leftist revolution had taken power in 1979, Reagan pushed relentlessly for aid to the counterrevolutionary forces known as the contras. The Nicaragua campaign was a virtual love affair with lawlessness. The contras were famous for their human rights abuses, and since they weren't strong enough to win militarily, their favorite targets tended to be civilian: schools, health clinics, and farmers' cooperatives. Such was the noble heroism of those Reagan claimed were "the moral equal of our Founding Fathers"

When Congress banned aid to the contras, Reagan sent it covertly, raising funds in part through dealings with Nicaraguan cocaine merchants who had fled the revolution. In 1986, the World Court ruled that Reagan's actions violated inter-national law. All of this, of course, was done in the name of "democracy."

graphic: Eric Drooker

Not that "democracy" was something the Reagan White House practiced itself. First, it turned out that a "secret team" had been illegally selling weapons to Iran and using the deals as a way to secure the release of US hostages held in the Middle East. (This, despite the administration's frequent boasts that "we will not negotiate with terrorists.") Second, the team had been taking the profits from these sales and transferring them to the CIA's contra army in Nicaragua (again, illegally). Of course, forming private businesses to carry out policies forbidden by the US Congress was not just breaking the law…

...it violated the checks and balances inscribed in the supreme law of the land.



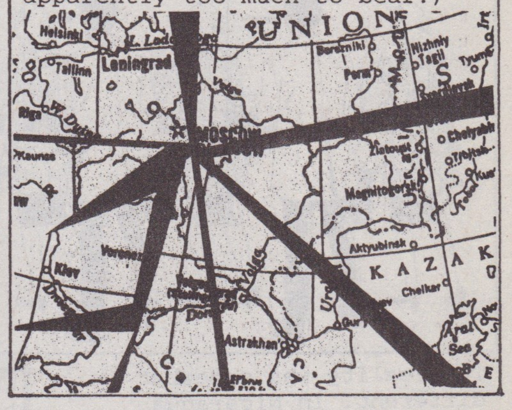
Suddenly, Reagan's foggy memory had become his biggest asset. As the scandal exploded, Reagan denied all awareness of the illegal doings, and his loyal underlings took the fall by claiming the old man had never been informed. A number of Iran-Contra figures were eventually convicted, but all received pardons from President Bush in 1992.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CASPAR WEINBERGER, → FOUND GUILTY OF PERJURY AND OBSTRUCTION OF CONGRESS.

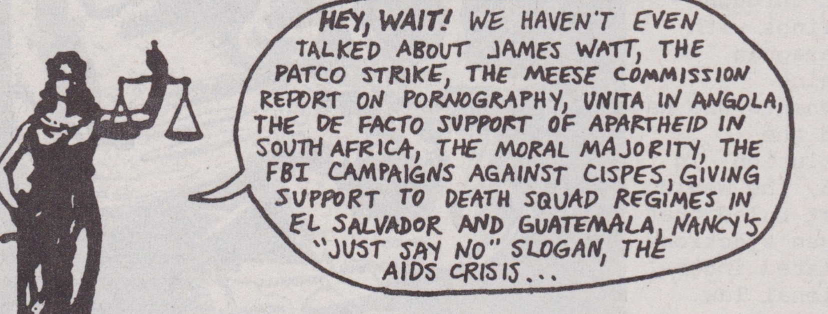
But it's a cruel prank of history that Reagan's capacity for self-delusion gave his backers a way to credit him with ending the Cold War.

In 1983, Reagan announced his intention for the US to develop space-based laser weaponry. Experts said the "Star Wars" plan would never work, and in time even the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, told Reagan the same thing.

But conservative myth-makers cling to the idea of Star Wars intimidating Gorbachev into making the changes that eventually broke up the USSR. (The idea of reform originating within the "Evil Empire" is apparently too much to bear.)



Reagan's presidency ended in 1989, but he continued to be a public figure until 1994, when it was announced that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, a progressive and incurable disease that affects the brain.



True. But if we recounted every crime and inanity of the Reagan years, we wouldn't have any time left to celebrate the present moment!

LOST IN LATIN AMERICA

REAGAN'S FOREIGN POLICY BLINDERS

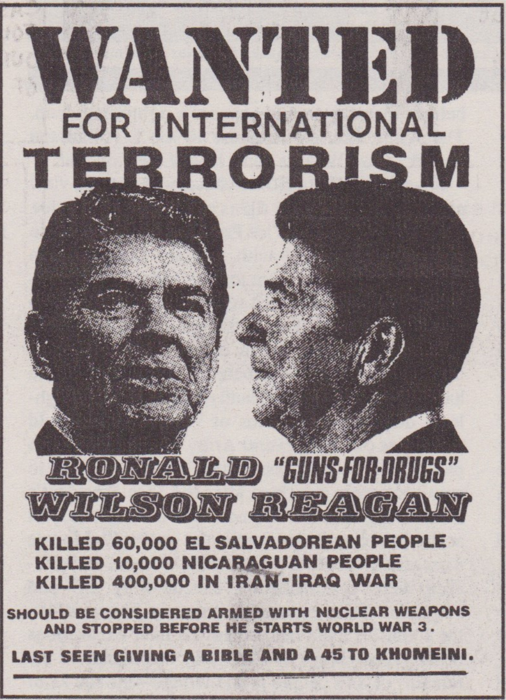
By Christy Thornton

The 1980s in Latin America are known as the "lost decade"—a time in which, despite democratic openings in many military-authoritarian nations, severe recession and an overwhelming debt crisis crippled entire nations, and bloody political conflicts tore deep wounds in the social structure of the hemisphere. There is perhaps no better lens through which to view the dramatic effects of the twilight of Cold War than the cash flows and bloodshed of Latin America's lost decade. If there is a single characterization that can be made of the Reagan administration's impact on Latin America and the Caribbean as a region during that time, it is Reagan's extreme simplification of the political and economic situations in the hemisphere. When asked, in 1982, what he had learned after a presidential tour of Latin America, the Great Communicator quipped, "Well, I learned a lot...I went down there to find out from them and [learn] from their views. You'd be surprised. They're all individual countries." This unscripted presidential foible reveals a painfully humorless truth about the Reagan administration: in the eyes of the Reaganites, Latin America was a wholly dependent terrain in which all political action could be neatly conscripted in the battle between capitalist good and Communist evil.

Reagan's rose-colored glasses, which painted America with the boorish optimism so celebrated in this country after his death, painted the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean with the unmistakable mark of a Communist advance. Indeed, in a made-for-TV film released by the American Security Council shortly after Reagan's inauguration, bearing the alarming title "Attack on the Americas!" the President himself decries "a new kind of colonialism" advancing in Central America and the Caribbean, one that was consolidating a "Soviet-Cuban military bloc." The discontent with military-authoritarian rule that was fomenting liberation struggles throughout the region was completely overlooked; Soviet aggression was, for the Reagan administration, the only possible explanation for the advance of leftist insurgents. And so it went throughout the region: political and economic struggles being played out between and across deep seated class and ethnic interests were stripped of their national contexts, interior logic, and history, and propped up upon the chessboard of world domination. Moreover, while the Soviets were supposedly marching steadily northward in the persons of Salvadoran guerillas, some of the most heinously repressive regimes in the hemisphere were receiving a steady stream of economic, military and moral support for their dedication to neoliberal capitalist values and anti-Communism. An in-depth review of the totality of the Reagan administration's impact on Latin America is impossible here; what follows is only a sample—a short résumé of terror wrought in the name of the Cold War.

Central America: Drawing a Line in the Sand

It was in Central America and the Caribbean that the Reagan administration feared the Communist advance most acutely, and so it was there that the military and political thrust of the Communist rollback was concentrated. The specter of Cuba haunted the Reagan administration; in a 1982 address to the organization of American States, Reagan's fear was palpable. Cuba's goal, he said, was "the expansion of Soviet-backed, Cuban-managed, Marxist-Leninist dictatorships." The fear of the emergence of such regimes, first in Nicaragua, where the Sandinista National Liberation Front had seized power in 1979, and then in neighboring El Salvador, where Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) was threatening the reign of the ruling oligarchy, drove the major foreign policy decisions of the Reagan administration's early years. Indeed, even before Reagan had won the election, a group of conservative ideologues unified under the rubric



of the Council for Inter-American Security (CIS) issued a report that underlined the basic principles of the New Right stance on Central America, and became the basis for Reagan's foreign policy in the region: increased military funding and training for "friendly" (read: right wing) Central American governments, and economic and psychological help in the nations' fight against "terrorism." The CIS report additionally sought to undermine Cuba by promoting the establishment of the Caribbean Basin Initiative and Radio Martí—both of which Reagan ushered into effect. A number of the report's authors would go on to become members of the Administration, in the State Department, National Security Council, and as diplomats in Latin America and elsewhere. Additionally, CIS would go on to become a *direct* financial supporter of the Nicaraguan Contras and to fund propaganda campaigns to influence US opinion, financed by fundraising dinners in the posh hotels of Beverly Hills.

These policies, which would come to be known as the Reagan Doctrine, created a familiar pattern in Central America. In Guatemala, for example, Reagan's Central America policy meant first, overturning an arms embargo against the Guatemalan government put in place by Jimmy Carter in response to the horrific human rights abuses of the 1970s, and then funneling money to the Guatemalan government so that they might step up their repression what they perceived as a growing guerilla insurgency. In the 1980s in Guatemala some 100,000 people are estimated to have been killed in the political unrest. A Guatemalan truth commission report found that the decade was the most intense period of bloodshed in the protracted conflict, and that the government had perpetrated some 94 percent of the killings, with 4 percent blamed on the guerillas and the remainder left unassigned. The report also found that the US government, including the CIA, had provided "direct and indirect support" for the government's actions, and declared that the US had supported a military that had committed "acts of genocide" against the indigenous Mayan population of Guatemala. Despite CIA intelligence that the government was supporting the large scale massacre of those deemed in opposition, Reagan declared after a meeting with the Guatemalan dictator Efrain Rios Montt in 1982 that the general was "totally dedicated to democracy" and that his government had been "getting a bum rap" on human rights. He promptly lifted the ban on military aid, and ushered in the bloodiest decade in modern Guatemalan history.

Honduras was another friendly dictatorship openly supported by the Reagan administration. In 1980, some 600 Salvadoran refugees were massacred by the Honduran military attempting to flee their own country, and their own military, across the Sumpul River. This flagrant abuse of human rights was altogether ignored by the Reagan administration. To ensure that no Sandinista or FMLN sympathizers gathered in Honduras, or attempted to traffic arms to the insurgent groups in other countries in the region, Regan provided more military assistance to Guatemala in fiscal year 1982 than in all the years between 1950 and 1979, some $10.7 million. In addition, tens of thousands of US military personnel were sent to the country, over the course of the 1980s, to undertake exercises meant to train the Honduran military, to demonstrate the on-the-ground power of the US military in the region, and to subvert the funding restrictions the US Congress had placed on support of the Nicaraguan Contras. In 1985, the US exempted Honduras and El Salvador from a provision prohibiting the use of aid for foreign police forces; the Honduran national police received almost $3 million. In subsequent years, the human rights community has unearthed evidence of the systematic torture and disappearance, by Honduran military and police personnel, of Honduran citizens thought to be sympathetic to the Sandinista and FMLN causes. In one chilling example, authorities excavated in 2001 the bodies of 185 people from the site of the El Aguacate Air Force Base, some 80 miles east of Tegucigalpa. The base was used during the Reagan administration as a secret detention and interrogation center, where Honduran troops trained by the US and Argentine militaries routinely tortured and killed prisoners. And the oversight of construction and operation of the base? Carried out by none other than John Negroponte, the current US

Nicaragua, during the Contra war—the bodies are those of Contras slain and displayed. Susan Meiselas / Magnum Photos.

Ambassador to Iraq.

It is El Salvador, however, that is the exemplary case of Reagan's profound oversimplifications of the political realities of Latin America. Reagan's view that the FMLN was a puppet insurgency built by Soviet-Cuban forces based in Nicaragua completely ignored the political reality of even the previous decade in El Salvador. The 1970s had been a tumultuous period in the country, as the government increasingly lost control of the military, which, with its increasing autonomy, became more violent and repressive in its protection of the landowning oligarchy. The repression fueled a popular discontent with the ruling oligarchy and the democratic process, fomenting an armed resistance against the government *and* the military. As the violence mounted, the government found itself battling both the right-wing military, which spawned El Salvador's notorious paramilitary death squads, and the increasingly armed leftist insurrection, which, inspired by the Sandinista victory, sought to oust the ruling oligarchy. In 1980, shortly after Reagan won the election, Archbishop Oscar Romero was murdered in San Salvador, and nine months later, four American churchwomen were raped, tortured and killed by paramilitary personnel. (Reagan would go on to say that the three nuns and one social worker were pro-Communist "political activists," and that, regardless, their deaths were accidental, having been caught in the crossfire at a roadblock. The Administration offered no explanation, based on this account, for the rapes of the women.)

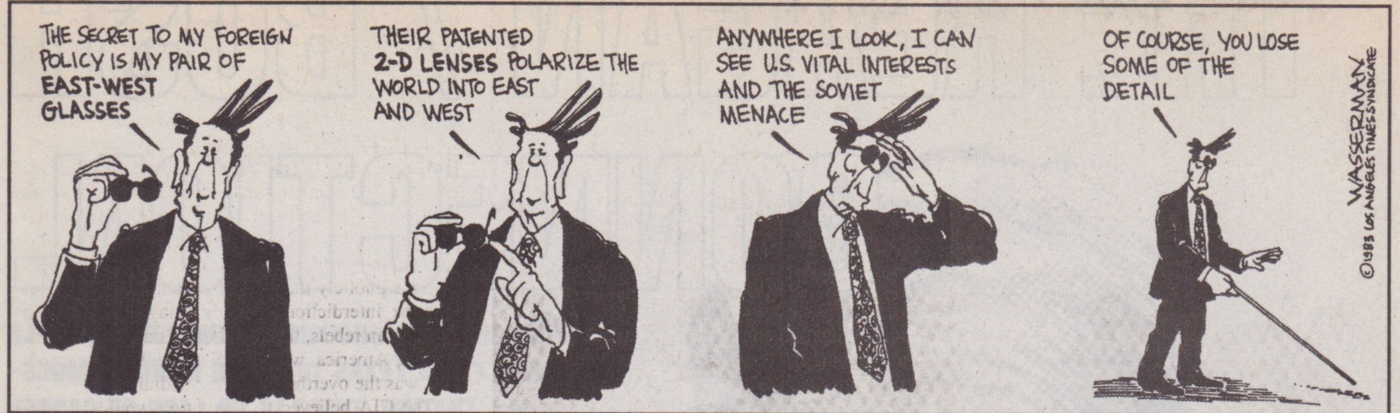
Reagan's Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, declared that the US would use El Salvador to draw a line in the sand against the spread of Communism in Central America. Upon taking office, Reagan immediately resumed military aid that had been suspended by Jimmy Carter after the murder of the four women. In 1982, US military assistance was more than $82 million, up from $35 million in the previous year (it would peak in 1984 at well over $196 million). He provided direct training and resources to the military, consciously ignoring the governing moderate junta and communicating directly with right-wing leaders—including Roberto D'Aubuisson, then the head of the right-wing ARENA party, who was later found by the UN Truth Commission to have directly ordered the murder of Archbishop Romero. D'Aubuisson even went so far as to claim in the media that, in his view, his meetings with Reagan administration led him to believe that they would support a right-wing coup. The White House's response to the D'Aubuisson remarks was "We just don't have a view on that."

Indeed, the White House chose not to have a view on a number of human rights abuses in El Salvador. In 1983, Reagan sent Vice President George Bush to the country to meet with military leaders in an attempt to convince them to curb some of their violent tendencies, but a CIA report from a mere month after the visit makes clear that the feeble attempt at pressuring the Salvadoran military to change was ineffectual: "Deaths attributed to political violence have not declined significantly, only notorious high-level death squads claims of violence. We would also point out that several Army commanders with past death squad associations...were appointed to new leadership positions after the Vice President's visit." Reagan chose to ignore this intelligence, just as he had chosen to ignore the grave El Mozote massacre of 1981, in which men, women, and children were systematically executed by US and Argentine trained counterinsurgency forces. When the forensics team had exhausted their excavations of the razed village in 1992, they had identified the remains of 143 people in the village—all but 12 of which were children. The Reagan administration's reaction was, predictably, to deny that the massacre had happened. Administration officials told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "no evidence could be found to confirm that government forces systematically massacred civilians in the operation zone" and that the reports of the massacre were guerilla propaganda. All in all, upward of 75,000 people were killed in the protracted battle that was fueled by Reagan's need to draw a line in the encroaching Communist sand.

If El Salvador was Reagan's line in the sand against the Soviets, it owed that honor to the Administration's fear of Nicaragua. Nicaragua was on Reagan's agenda from the first days of his campaign; the Sandinista takeover of the government in 1979, with its Soviet and Cuban ties and its threats of industry nationalization and land redistribution, had sounded alarm bells in every corner of Washington. Indeed, Jimmy Carter had earmarked, in the last days of his presidency, some $1 million to support the domestic opposition in Nicaragua. But for the Reagan administration, this was a lenient stance—his support for the "freedom of the Nicaraguan people" would come with much greater force. The Administration's hostilities toward Nicaragua were formalized only a few months into his presidency, with a November, 1981 National Security Directive that authorized support for a "covert paramilitary operation" in Central America, ostensibly to prevent the Sandinistas from arming rebels throughout the region –although the language of the directive was murky, and members of Congress doubted the intentions of Reagan's plan. Reagan approved some $19.5 million for the CIA to create a 500-man commando force to establish an anti-Sandinista political front. A coalition group was formed by to be the public face of the *contrarevolucionarios*—the Contras. Although the US retained publicly that the justification for the effort was the interdiction of arms being channeled to Salvadoran rebels, those operating on the ground in Central America were well aware that Reagan's goal was the overthrow of the Sandinistas.

The CIA believed the operation would be relatively easy and take little time and resources; in 1984, the *Washington Post* quoted one official as he recalled, "It was hubris; we were going to knock off these little brown people on the cheap." By 1983, after press disclosures of the CIA's activities in Nicaragua, the agency was forced to admit to Congress that it had taken "day-to-day control of counterrevolutionary activities." The Contra force was still growing in 1983, and the CIA was confident that the Sandinistas could be ousted by the end of the year. By 1984, however, the Sandinista army had pushed the Contras back to their bases in neighboring Honduras, and it was becoming clear that Reagan's mercenary band of "freedom fighters" didn't represent any real threat to the Sandinista regime. The Contras had resorted to hit-and-run guerilla activity, often attacking schools and health care facilities, in an attempt to undermine the ability of the Sandinista government to effectively care for its people. What this meant, of course, was a campaign of directly targeting civilians, often destroying whole pro-Sandinista villages, torturing their men, raping their women and burning their meager buildings and crops to the ground. In October of 1984, a CIA-authored manual bearing the title "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare" was brought to the public's attention by the Associated Press; the so-called "murder manual" instructed Nicaraguan rebels on the use of torture and ways to "neutralize" selected enemies. Congress was appalled; they limited the remaining funding for the project for the remainder of 1984, and suspended all funding and banned direct CIA involvement in Nicaragua in 1985.

It was then that Reagan uttered his now-famous directive to National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane, in which he implored McFarlane to find some way to keep the Contra force together, "body and soul." McFarlane then turned, of course, to the White House liaison to the NSC, Oliver North. North traveled to Contra camps in Honduras and Nicaragua to assure the forces that, despite the Congressional interdiction, the Administration was still completely committed to the overthrow of the Sandinistas, and that after the election, Reagan would publicly push for the removal of the Sandinista government. In the mean time, North organized private sources of funding for the Contra effort, bringing together myriad right-wing groups and individuals to ensure that the Contras didn't go broke. Of course, his most creative of these financing options was what would become known as the Iran-Contra affair, in which profits from secret arms sales to Iran were diverted to aid the Contras. While the Iran-Contra affair brought a great deal of scandal to Washington, its fallout did little to ameliorate the situation in Nicaragua. In total, more than 30,000 people had died in the bloodshed resulting from US indirect intervention, the vast majority



civilians, and the political culture of Nicaragua today still struggles with the legacy of the blood shed in the 1980s.

"A Shared Commitment to Western Ideals": Reagan and South American Dictators

In the whole of Reagan's policy toward Latin America, much was made of the Administration's support for freedom and democracy, in a language echoed by the current president, George W. Bush. Freedom, however, was defined in practice by Reagan as the absence or defeat of Communist encroachment, and democracy was only promoted where non-democratic regimes were unfriendly to the United States. For where Communism didn't immediately threaten the stability of a regime—or a major US trade route or other economic interest—authoritarianism was tolerated, and often economically and politically supported. Jeane Kirkpatrick, Reagan's ambassador to the UN, was the architect of a dubious policy distinction between authoritarian governments and totalitarian regimes: right-wing "authoritarian" dictators, no matter how brutally repressive, were to be tolerated, as their friendliness to the US was the Administration's primary concern. "Totalitarian" regimes, on the other hand, were to be hastily removed; their left-leaning leaders (whether democratically elected or not) represented the encroachment of Soviet aggression, and were therefore a threat to US stability.

Reagan's stance toward Chile, for example, was unequivocal: While Carter had suspended economic and diplomatic relations with Chile after the 1976 car bombing murders of Orlando Letelier and Ronny Moffitt in Washington, DC, and had been at the forefront of a campaign of international isolation of the dictator, Reagan lifted economic sanctions on the Pinochet regime only a month after taking office, restoring international financing to the dictator and encouraging multilateral lending institutions to approve loans to his regime. Because the US shared with Chile a "commitment to Western ideals and values," according to Reagan's ambassador to Chile, James Theberge, the Administration made clear that Reagan's policy toward Chile was "to treat friends as friends." This treatment meant, among other things, a secret deal in 1987 between Reagan and Pinochet for the US to sell 15 "transport" helicopters to Pinochet's government—as non-military equipment, they weren't covered under an arms ban put in place by Congress as a human rights provision. 1987 was, however, the first year in which there were new reports of disappearances, torture, and murder of "dissidents" since the late 1970s, including the killing of twelve members of an organized opposition movement. Moreover, the sale of transport helicopters to a regime which had famously used helicopters to roam the country, abduct, torture and kill dissidents, and transport their bodies out to sea to be dumped—to say that they sale was morally questionable would be to put it lightly.

The brutal repressions of the Pinochet government, which spawned the exile of tens of thousands of people and included the extra judicial killings of more than 3000 people and the disappearances of more than a thousand civilians (the remains of 900 of which have yet to be found), were, like so many other flagrant human rights abuses, ignored by the Reagan administration because of Pinochet's rabid anti-Communism and brutal economic liberalization program. It is no coincidence that Pinochet's neoliberal revolution, masterminded by the economic architects at the University of Chicago—the Chicago Boys, as they are known—served a model for Reagan's own economic revolution; the resulting rise in inequality in both countries serves as a painful reminder of the close ties between the leaders.

Reagan's relationship with Argentina was similar, although complicated by the war in the Malvinas. Prior to the escalation of that conflict, the Reagan administration had poured military aid into Galtieri's Argentina in return for the dictator's support in Central America—Argentine troops and intelligence officials had worked along side the Americans, particularly in Honduras, training counterrevolutionary forces and aiding the brutal militaries in combating insurgency. This support went directly to the military that Galtieri—a graduate of the School of the Americas—controlled, in an Argentina in which the military junta that had ruled the country since 1976 had dissolved parliament; banned unions, political parties and provincial governments; and killed or disappeared nearly 30,000 "dissidents," most of them workers and students, in its own dirty war—a war that the Argentine junta justified as a "war on terrorism."

The State Department had been well aware of the military's use of torture since the junta's take over; indeed, one communiqué from the US Embassy in 1979 describes the routine use of "cigarette burns; sexual abuse, rape; removing teeth, fingernails and eyes; burning with boiling water, oil and acid; and even castration" in interrogating prisoners. The Embassy continued to send reports of torture, rape, abuse and murder from Buenos Aires, but the Reagan administration consistently ignored them (as had his predecessors) and continued to funnel money to the Argentine junta to support its "anti-terrorism" efforts. When, in 1982, Galtieri invaded the Malvinas Islands, he was sure that his friend in Washington would support him. But the Reagan administration, after some deliberation, sided with Britain, and it imposed economic sanctions on Argentina. Argentina's loss of favor with the Reagan administration would ultimately bring down the ruling junta, but the scars of US support for the fascistic, repressive regime had already left deep scars in the Argentine psyche.

The Legacy of Reagan, the Realities of Latin America

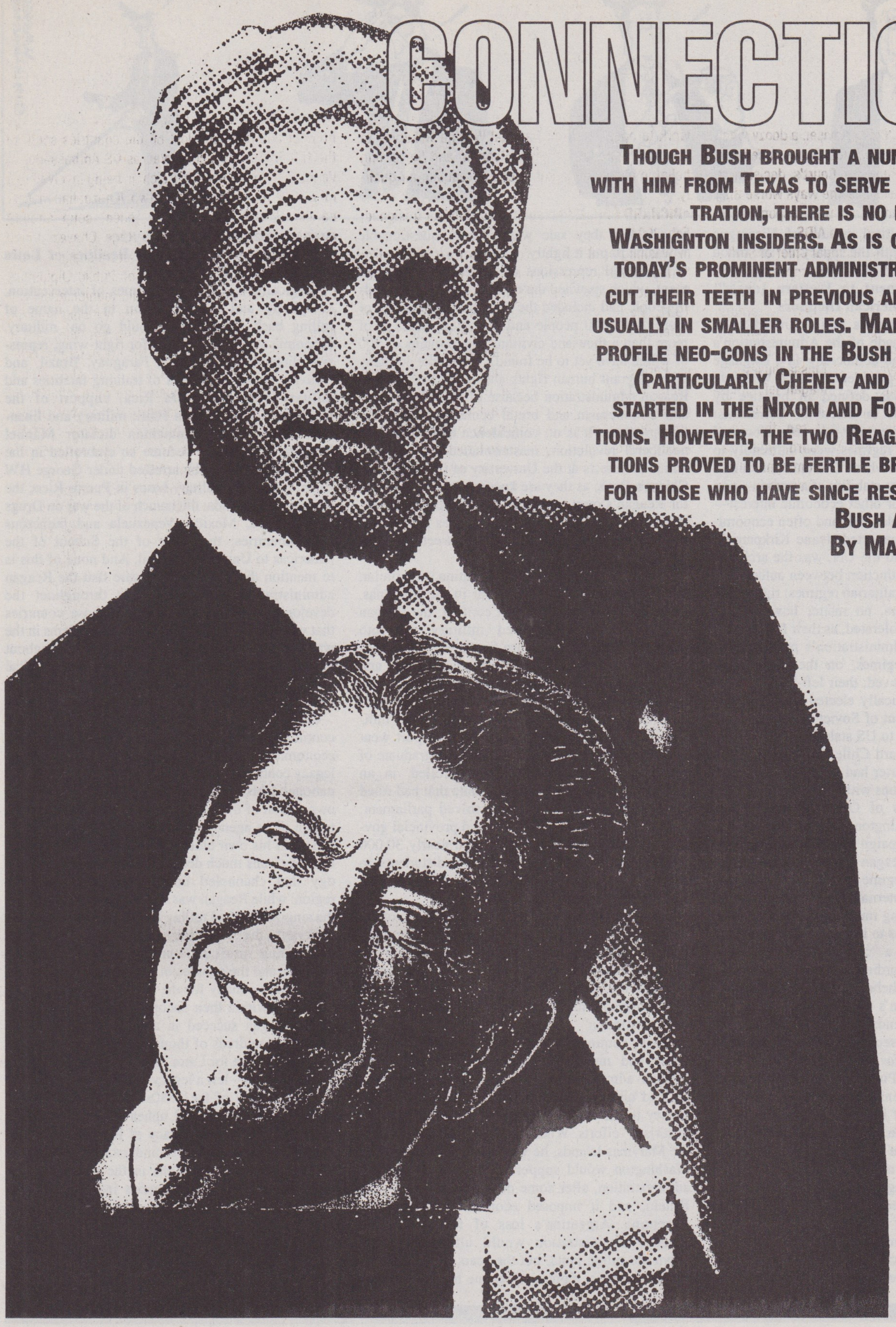
Tragically, this litany of crimes of intervention, complicity and destabilization in the name of rolling back Communism could go on: military, economic and moral support for right-wing, repressive dictators in Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, and Bolivia; the establishment of training facilities and military bases in Costa Rica; support of the Duvalier dictatorships in Haiti; military and financial support for Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega, who would become so embroiled in the drug trade he would be arrested under George HW Bush; bolstering military bases in Puerto Rico; the invasion of Grenada; the launch of the war on Drugs in Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela and numerous other countries; the move of the School of the Americas to United States soil. And none of this is to mention the economic pressure that the Reagan administration brought to bear throughout the developing world, particularly on those countries that were suffering from severe debt problems in the wake of the 1970s petro-dollar boom. Throughout the continent, Reagan's policies wreaked political and economic havoc, the consequences of which can still be felt today.

Certainly, Reagan's legacy for Latin America is a continued struggle to recover from the disastrous economic and political violence of the 1980s; it is a legacy continually unearthed out of mass graves and national debts. In projecting onto Latin America his own vision of the world, Reagan stripped an entire region of its agency and placed the fate of a hemisphere in his own blood-lined pockets. The reality, however, runs much deeper than the rivers of ideology that channeled untold militarism into the region: while Reagan was shoring up militaries with the singular goal of rolling back Communism in his backyard, the countries of Latin America were undergoing profound political and economic changes, and the peoples of the region were finding their voices—many for the first time since decolonization—within their cacophonous political structures. Reagan succeed in aiding the massacre of countless hundreds of thousands of people, but his totalizing vision for Latin America –either with him or against him—left a legacy much less clear. In the end, the legacy of the 1980s in Latin America is, indeed, one of profound upheaval, but it is much more than simply the legacy of Reagan. In recognizing that, and seeking to understand not only the United States' interventions in the region but the political and economic contexts into which those interventions play, we take the ultimate stance against Reagan's view of the world, and refuse to submit to his demagoguery. After all, you'd be surprised—they're all individual countries.

THE REAGAN / BUSH CONNECTION.

THOUGH BUSH BROUGHT A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH HIM FROM TEXAS TO SERVE IN HIS ADMINISTRATION, THERE IS NO LACK OF CAREER WASHIGNTON INSIDERS. AS IS OFTEN THE CASE, TODAY'S PROMINENT ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS CUT THEIR TEETH IN PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS, USUALLY IN SMALLER ROLES. MANY OF THE HIGH-PROFILE NEO-CONS IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION (PARTICULARLY CHENEY AND RUMSFELD) GOT STARTED IN THE NIXON AND FORD ADMINISTRATIONS. HOWEVER, THE TWO REAGAN ADMINISTRATIONS PROVED TO BE FERTILE BREEDING GROUND FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SINCE RESURFACED IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION.

BY MARK MURRMANN.



•ELLIOT ABRAMS, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director of Democracy, Human Rights and International Operations at the National Security Council

Try fitting that title on a business card! Abrams' ties to the Reagan administration run deep and he is distiguished as being of the people serving in the current administration who was indicted (and later pardoned by Bush I) for activities in the Iran-Contra scandals. He served as Reagan's Asssistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs from 1981-89.

•GARY BAUER, Chairman of Campaign for Working Families

Reagan's Chief Domestic Policy Adviser. a doozy when it comes to gay and lesbian issues. Bauer once commented that Vermont Supreme Court's decision to recognize gay couples "was in some ways worse than terrorism." Under Reagan, Bauer was responsible in part for Reagan's famed silence on AIDS.

•ANDREW H. CARD, JR., Presidential Chief of Staff

Formerly director of Office of Intergovernmental Affairs under Reagan (1983-87), acting as liason between the White House and the nation's governors. Card goes back about twenty-fives years with the Bush family. He has worked on various campaigns (himself running for governor of Massachusetts in 1982, losing) stuck around after Reagan left office, serving as Deputy Chief of Staff and Secretary of Transportation for George I. Card ran the 2000 Republican national convention. Card, you may remember said about the Iraq war, "From a marketing point of view, you don't introduce new products in August."

•ELAINE L. CHAO, Secretary, Department of Labor

Married to Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, Chao is distiguished as being the first Asian-American woman appointed to a cabinet position. She worked in the Department of Transportation (as Deputy Maritime Administrator) under Reagan, and served as a White House fellow in 1983.

•DOUGLAS FEITH, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy

Currently the number three civilian at the Pentagon, Feith's neocon roots go deep. Served under Richard Allen in the White House National Security Staff during Reagan's first term. After Reagan's re-election, Feith served on Richard Perle's Pentagon team as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Negotiations Policy.

•ALAN GREENSPAN, Chairman, Federal Reserve Board

The long-serving Chairman was on Reagan's President's Economic Policy Board and served as Chairman of the Committee on Social Security Reform, where he urged privatization of Social Security. In recent months Greenspan has come under fire for what is perceived as politizing a traditionally non-political position. His frequent visits to the White House and countering his own previous statements that conflicted with the Bush administration's policy goals have only added fuel to critic's fire.

•STEPHEN J. HADLEY, Deputy National Security Advisor

Known as Condolezza Rice's right-hand man, he took the fall when the National Security Council was blamed for "mishandling" information about the alleged Iraqi uranium purchase from Niger. Hadley cut his teeth in the NCS in the 70s, when he worked in the Office of Program Analysis until 1977. He worked as a lawyer until 2001, taking time out in 1986 to serve as counsel on the President's Special Review Board, aka, the Tower Commission.

•I. LEWIS "SCOOTER" LIBBY, Asst. to President and Chief of Staff to Vice President

In 1981, Libby worked under Paul Wolfowitz at the State Department, where he worked until 1985. He first served as a member of the Policy Planning Staff in the Office of the Secretary, then as Director of Special Projects, Bureau of East Asian and Pacifica Affairs. He is now seen as an influential voice on foreign policy voice in the White House.

•GALE A. NORTON, Secretary, Department of the Interior

Though she served as Asst. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture (1984-85) and Associate Solicitor for the Department of Agriculture (1985-90) Norton is known for her disdain of the Endangered Species Act, her work to open the Artic National Wildlife Reserves to drill (work she began under Reagan) and her strong belief in allowing market forces to regulate air quality.

•RICHARD PERLE, Pentagon Policy Advisor (resigned, Feb. 2004)

In Washington it takes a lot to earn a moniker like "Prince of Darkness." His role in the Reagan (and later Bush) administration is just the tip of the iceberg. In 1981, Perle was appointed Asst. Sectretary of Defense. Two years later, Perle caught heat for taking a $50,000 payment from an Israeli arms manufacturer. Perle's ties to Israeli go back over twenty-five years. In 1970, the FBI reported that Perle had leaked classified information to the Israeli embassy. Later, in 2002, Perle's position (chairman) on the Defense Policy Board and his close ties to Israel were cited as part of Israel's undue influence on the push for war against Iraq (he, along with Douglas Feith and David Wurmser participated in 1996 Likud policy deliberations and wrote a paper which claimed removing Hussein from power was an important Israeli stategic goal as a means of countering Syria's regional ambitions). Perle is worth looking up on your own.

•JOHN POINDEXTER, Director, Information Awarness Office

National Security Advisor under Reagan, Poindexter lost his job after his convictions on conspiracy, lying to Congress, defrauding the government and destroying evidence, all in the Iran-Contra scandal. Of course, the convictions were overturned in 1990. In 2002, Poindexter was tapped to run the Pentagon's short-lived Information Awareness Office and is still working in the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Poindexter most recently made headlines for suggesting the Pentagon establish a market to allow people to bet on future political events, including terrorist attacks, coups and assassinations.

•COLIN L. POWELL, Secretary, Department of State

In Vietnam, Powell's casual investigation rejected as false initial charges of a civilian massacre at My Lai. As a member of Reagan's national security team, he personally arranged the illegal transfer of at least 2,000 missiles to Iran. In his autobiography, Powell claims that he was "the chief administration advocate" for the Contras. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for both the invasion of Panama (and decimation of civilian neighborhoods) and the Gulf War. Powell has been dismissive of Gulf War Syndrome, while 184,000 of the 697,000 Gulf War troops have filed disability claims with the government.

•ANTHONY J. PRINCIPI, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs

A decorated vet of the Vietnam War Principi has long served in the Veterans Affairs sector of the government. In 1983, Principi was the Veteran Administration's assistand deputy administator for congressional and public affairs. Then, from 1984 to 1988 he worked a the Republican chief counsel and staff director of the Senate Committee on Vetetran Affairs.

•OTTO REICH, Asst. Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs

Unable to get him appointed in the Senate, Bush made a recess appointment of Reich to oversee the U.S.'s Latin American affairs. Though the appointment expired a month later, Reich still serves in the administration on the the Latin American policy team and in 2002 was named to the Board of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly the School of the Americas, where many of the Central American death squads were trained. The irony of this post isn't lost on the countries south of the U.S. In 1986, Reich served as US Ambassador to Venezuala. Some point to Reich as being involved in a mid-70s airplane bombing by two Venezualian mercenaries, as well as the more recent coup attempt against Venezualian president Huge Chavez. Reich was deeply involved in the Iran-Contra scandal. From 1983-86, Reich ran the Office of Public Diplomacy (OPD), a covert psyops and media manipulation unit that reported to Oliver North in the National Security Agency. Reich penned op-ed pieces that were sent to U.S. media under the names of Nicuraguan rebel leaders. His domestic (that is, aimed at the U.S.) propaganda and pyschological operations were reported on by the NSC, General Accounting Office and House Foreign Affairs Committee. Prior this, from 1981-83, Reich worked as the Asst. Administrator of Agency for International Development (AID).

•CONDOLEZZA RICE, National Security Advisor

While she served as an international affairs fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, in 1986 Rice was a Special Assistant to the Director of the Joint Cheifs of Staff, tasked to work on nuclear strategic planning.

•ANN M. VENEMAN, Secretary, Department of Agriculture

Spent seven years in Dept. of Agriculture under Reagan-Bush (86-92). Veneman is known for her pro-GE foods, pro-export, pro-globalization, pro-cutting (she oversees the Forest Service).

•PAUL WOLFOWITZ, Deputy Secretary of Defense

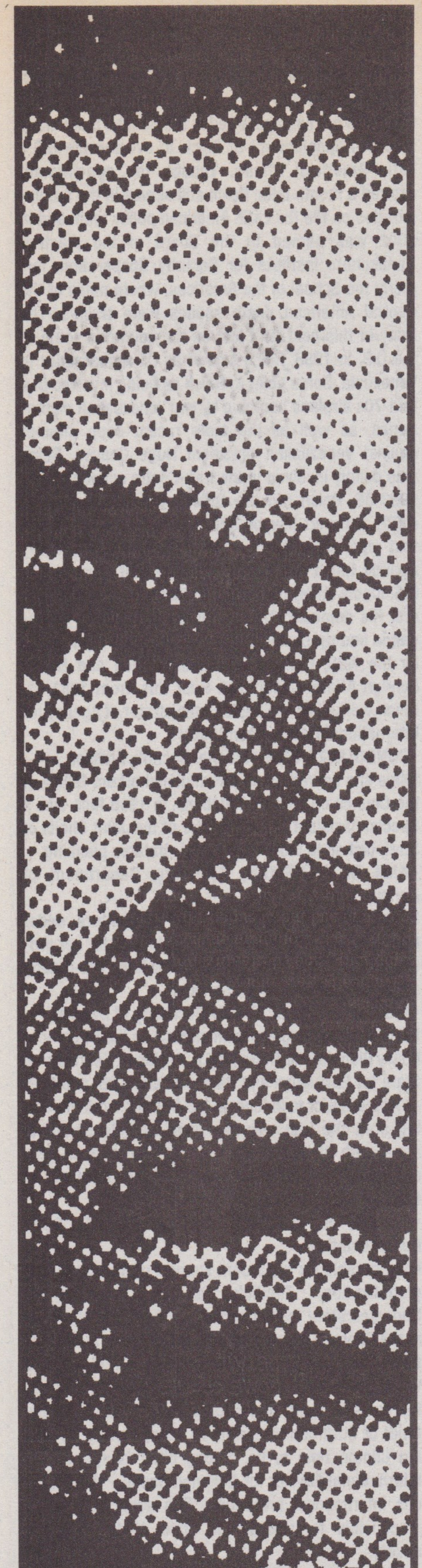
Served in the Reagan administration as the Director of Policy Planning for State (1981), Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (-86) and then as Ambassador to Indonesia (86-89). His work in helping craft the Iraq war has been well documented. Along with Richard Perle, Wolfwitz worked with neocon godfather Albert Wohlstetter at the University of Chicago in the 1960s.

•ROBERT B. ZOELLICK, Ambassador, U.S. Trade Representative

Most notable for his ardent support of free trade and globalization, Zoellick, as a State Dept. Undersecretary for Economic and Agricultural Affairs in the George I years, was a prime architect and negotiator for the proposals that became NAFTA and the World Trade Organization. An Assistant Secretary in the Treasury Dept. under Reagan, he became Deputy Chief of Staff late in George I's term, moving on during Clinton time to be, among other things, Senior International Advisor for Goldman Sachs – the notorious international investment firm some suggest is responsible for widespread Third World economic misery.

Convicts in the (White) House

Elliot Abrams
John Negroponte
John Poindexter
Otto Reich



REMEMBERING REAGAN: AN A TO Z PRIMER

FROM THE FIRING OF THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS TO DEATH SQUAD MASSACRES IN EL SALVADOR, FROM HIS PRESIDENTIAL SILENCE ON AIDS TO HIS INVENTION OF THE "WELFARE QUEEN," THIS PRIMER IS A SHORT AND SELECTIVE REMEMBRANCE OF THE REAGAN LEGACY. MUCH OF THE IMPACT OF REAGAN'S FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES, AS WELL AS HIS STANCE ON THE "CULTURE WARS" AND TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE TERMS OF PUBLIC DEBATE, ARE AS RELEVANT AS EVER.

Air Traffic Controllers
On August 3, 1981, 13,000 members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) walked off their jobs. Reagan did not hesitate in following the advice of Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis to fire the PATCO workers within a matter of hours. His actions opened and encouraged a new era of union busting by employers, anti-union policies, and other measures that greatly diminished labor rights and workers' protections (both economic and health protections).

Angola
The Reagan White House funded and armed a terrorist guerilla army called UNITA during the Angolan civil war, claiming that UNITA was a democratic force despite its known human rights abuses. In the *Guardian*, David Aaronovitch notes, "Reagan welcom[ed] Jonas Savimbi of the Unita organisation to the White House and [spoke] of his murderous outfit in Angola winning 'a victory that electrifies the world and brings great sympathy and assistance from other nations to those struggling for freedom.' Actually what Savimbi was doing was prolonging a civil war in which the UN estimates that 300,000 children died directly or indirectly during the Reagan years, and Angola was covered in landmines. Human Rights Watch reports that Unita's indiscriminate use of landmines, caused there to be more than 15,000 amputees in the country by 1988, ranking the country alongside Afghanistan and Cambodia in the league of blown-off limbs." ("The terrible legacy of the Reagan years," June 8, 2004)

Apartheid
Throughout his presidency, Reagan opposed divestiture and sanctions against apartheid South Africa. At the height of apartheid and the struggle of the ANC against continued racial segregation and oppression, in 1985 Reagan praised the government of P.W. Botha, "They have eliminated the segregation that we once had in our own country." Later in 1986, after Congress had had enough of the carnage in South Africa to vote for limited sanctions, Reagan vetoed them. Congress overrode the veto, but Reagan proceeded to put no muscle behind the sanctions. Mandela remained in jail and at least 2,000 political prisoners remained detained without trial. In 1987 Reagan published a report that said additional sanctions "would not be helpful."

Abortion
Throughout his presidency, Reagan argued for a constitutional amendment guaranteeing fetal rights to "life," and spoke regularly to antiabortion activists at such events as the "March for Life." However, it is arguable that Reagan made such overtures as political calculations, since as California governor, he signed a measure legalizing abortion in the state in 1967.

Afghanistan
After the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Reagan administration vigorously campaigned for strategic support for anti-Soviet forces within Afghanistan. By the mid-1980s, the Reagan administration was giving the *mujahaddin*, who later became the Taliban and al-Queda, half a billion dollars a year in their struggle against the Soviets. His officials strong-armed the Saudis into matching the US contribution, so that Saudi Intelligence chief Faisal al-Turki turned to Usamah Bin Laden to funnel the money to the Afghans. In 1985, Reagan called the *mujahaddin* "an example to the world of the ideals we hold most dear, the ideals of freedom and independence."

AIDS
AIDS was first reported in 1981, but President Reagan could not bring himself to address the plague until March 1987, at which time there were 60,000 reported cases of full-blown AIDS and 30,000 deaths.

Much of Reagan's power resided in a broad base of born-again Christian Republican conservatives who embraced a deeply reactionary social agenda that included a virulent, demonizing homophobia. "Men of God" like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell articulated sentiments portraying gay men (and to a lesser extent lesbians) as diseased sinners and promoted the idea that AIDS was a punishment from God. In the Republican Party, zealous right-wingers such as Rep. William Dannemeyer of California and Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina reiterated these messages, while in the Reagan White House, people such as Secretary of Education William Bennett and Gary Bauer, Reagan's domestic policy adviser, worked to enact them in the administration's policies. The White House Director of Communications, Patrick Buchanan, once argued in print that AIDS is nature's revenge on gay men.

This meant that in practical terms, AIDS research was chronically under-funded. When doctors at the Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health asked for more funding for their work on AIDS, they were routinely denied it. Between June 1981 and May 1982 the CDC spent less than $1 million on AIDS and $9

million on Legionnaire's Disease. At that point more than 1,000 of the 2,000 reported AIDS cases resulted in death; there were fewer than 50 deaths from Legionnaire's Disease.

The Department of Health and Human Services begged for funding privately, and Reagan refused. Congress allocated money for AIDS research, in the early stages of the disease when it was not generally known how the disease was transmitted, (e.g., from unprotected sex or dirty needles or tainted transfusions), and *Reagan refused to spend it.* This refusal to fund research exacerbated the public health crisis posed by the AIDS epidemic. When health and support groups in the gay community initiated education and prevention programs, they were denied federal funding. In October 1987, Senator Helms amended a federal appropriations bill to prohibit AIDS education efforts that "encourage or promote homosexual activity" — that is, efforts on how to have safe sex. And when almost all medical experts spoke out against mandatory HIV testing (since it would drive those most at risk away) and groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union and Lambda Legal Defense Fund were attempting to combat discrimination against people with HIV/AIDS, Republicans such as Vice President George Bush in 1987 and Dannemeyer (in a California state referendum) in 1988 called for mandatory HIV testing.

When Rock Hudson, a friend and colleague of the Reagans, was diagnosed with AIDS and died in 1985, Reagan still did not speak out. When family friend William F. Buckley, in a March 18, 1986, *New York Times* opinion article, called for mandatory testing for HIV and said that HIV-positive gay men should have this information forcibly tattooed on their buttocks (and IV-drug users on their arms) Reagan said nothing. In 1986 (after five years of complete silence), when Surgeon General C. Everett Koop released a report calling for AIDS education in schools, Bennett and Bauer did everything possible to undercut and prevent funding for Koop's initiative. In 1987, Reagan finally appointed an AIDS commission that included opponents of AIDS education and was devoid of physicians who had treated AIDS patients or scientists who had engaged in AIDS research.

Anecdotes (also known as **Lies**)

In his book *When Presidents Lie*, Eric Alterman elaborates, "Reagan's own penchant for self-delusion has been widely documented. He frequently convinced himself of historical truths on the basis of old movies he half-recalled. He pretended to one White House visitor to have participated in the liberation of German concentration camps at the end of World War II though he hand never even gone overseas as a soldier. He entertained a strange fascination with the End of Days and was even known to speculate that they might take place during his presidency. He invented what he called 'a verbal message' from the Pope in support of his Central American policies, which was news to everyone at the Vatican. He announced one day in 1985 that South Africa—though still ruled by the vicious apartheid regime of P.W. Botha—had somehow 'eliminated the segregation that we once had in our own country.' Such strange pronouncements by the president of the United States eventually grew to be considered so routine that rarely did anyone in the White House ever bother to correct them. The president simply had a penchant, one former senior adviser admitted, to 'build these little worlds and live in them.' One of his children added, 'He makes things up and believes them.' What is more astounding is the fact that he convinced other people to believe them too."

Asylum Policy

Under the Reagan administration, asylum policy became an ever-more important ideological tool in the Cold War. While ignoring the persecution claims of those fleeing authoritarian regimes in this hemisphere that the Reagan White House supported, asylum seekers from communist regimes or regions controlled by communists – the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Vietnam, Cuba, and Afghanistan—were welcomed. Reagan argued that support for rightwing regimes would stop the rise of communism in those countries, and prevent a tide of anticommunist refugees to the United States. As it was, millions had already fled those regimes his administration supported, and Reagan repeatedly refused to grant asylum to these refugees, despite House resolutions in favor of asylum for many of the migrants. Despite being victims of authoritarian terror, thousands were deported, and thousands more indefinitely detained in guarded camps because they were not of "strategic interest" in the Cold War.

Mainline Protestant churches and some Roman Catholic dioceses, along with immigrant and refugees rights groups, pressed class-action suits on behalf of these refugees, and undertook a public campaign of civil disobedience. In what was known as the Sanctuary Movement, this loose coalition helped many Salvadorans and Guatemalans cross the Mexican-US border illegally.

Bitburg

In April 1985, the White House announced that President Reagan would lay a wreath at the Bitburg, West Germany, military cemetery housing the graves of both American and German Nazi soldiers. However, it was quickly noted that there are, in fact, no Americans buried there. While presidential aide Michael Deaver was in West Germany searching for an "appropriate" concentration camp for the President to visit, President Reagan laid the wreath and defended his visit to Bitburg by claiming the German Nazi soldiers "were victims, just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps." His visit to the gravesites of SS officers was immortalized in the Ramones' song, "Bonzo Goes to Bitburg."

Blacklist

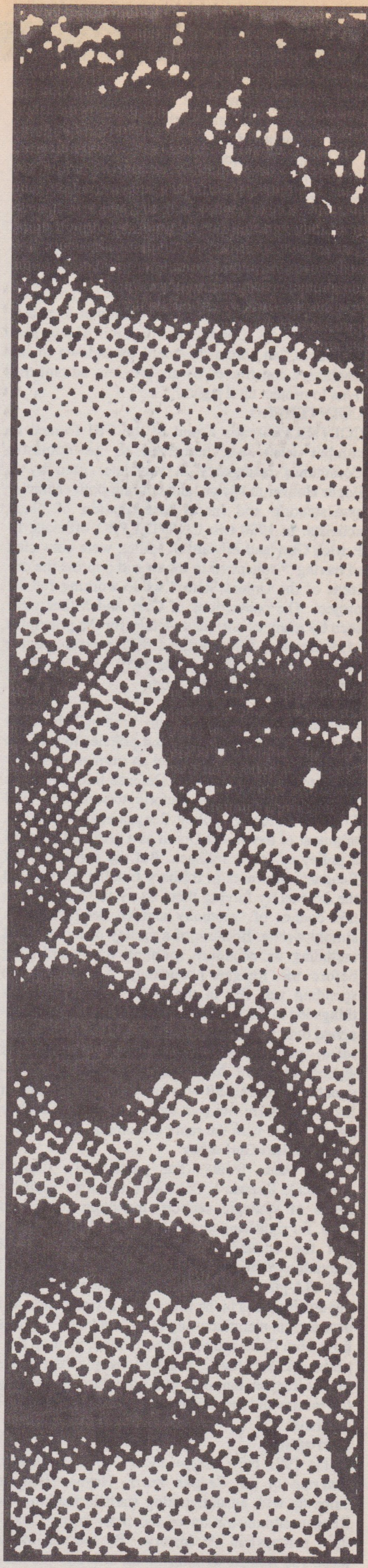
In 1960, Reagan claimed "Hollywood has no blacklist." FBI records have since shown that this was a blatant lie. As then-president of the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan personally informed on several actors to HUAC (see House Un-American Activities Committee), destroying their careers in the process. It was no coincidence that the vast majority of those blacklisted in Hollywood had been in the forefront of the struggle to organize and gain union recognition for actors, writers and directors. Under Reagan, SAG also enlisted in the Cold War. The board voted to support the Crusade for Freedom, a public fundraising "cover" for a project organized and run by U.S. intelligence agencies to destabilize Communist regimes in Europe.

Bob Jones University

In 1982, Ronald Reagan sided with Bob Jones University, a Christian private school, in a lawsuit against the restrictions of the IRS, which denied tax exemptions to racially segregated schools. A largely white institution (with a few token students of color), Bob Jones University prohibited interracial dating and marriage in the name of "racial purity." Reagan claimed he did not realize that it was a civil rights case, or that many Christian schools practiced racial segregation.

Civil Rights

Reagan never supported the use of federal powers to provide African Americans with civil rights. In 1980, Reagan said that the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965 had been "humiliating to the South." He also said in a 1980 campaign speech in Philadelphia, Mississippi, a town infamous for the murder of civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, "I believe in states' rights." "States' rights" is still used



in the South as a code indicating support of Jim Crow laws and segregation. He has also said that he would have voted against the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and opposed affirmation action.

After taking office in 1981, Reagan began a sustained attack on the government's civil rights apparatus, opening an assault on affirmative action and social welfare programs and embracing the white supremacist leaders of then-apartheid South Africa. So thorough was Reagan's attack on programs of importance to African Americans, that the Citizens Commission on Civil Rights, an organization formed in the wake of Reagan's attempt to neuter the official U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, said he caused "an across-the-board breakdown in the machinery constructed by six previous administrations to protect civil rights."

COINTELPRO

COINTELPRO was a unit of the FBI formed to combat what was perceived to be domestic Communist insurgency. It was later used by J. Edgar Hoover to spy on, and commit both character assassination and literal assassination of black activists. In 1980 two COINTELPRO officials, L. Patrick Grey and Edward S. Miller, were convicted of having ""conspired to injure and oppress the citizens of the United States" while working for the project. The convictions of Grey and Miller were seen by many as a limited victory for the principles of democracy. But Grey and Miller never spent a day in jail. In 1981, while they were awaiting appeal, Reagan pardoned them.

Cold War

Reagan is often credited with "ending" the Cold War with his hostile stance and policies toward the Soviet Union, which included an immense military build-up (with the Strategic Defense Initiative as its "star") and belligerent rhetoric toward the "Evil Empire." In foreign policy, Reagan abandoned containment of the Soviet Union as a goal and adopted a policy of active rollback. But the argument that Reagan's increases in military funding bankrupted the Soviets by forcing them to try to "keep up" in this contest of "mutually assured destruction" is simply wrong. Because of a variety of factors, and including an economy spiraling downward long before the Reagan presidency, Soviet defense spending was flat in the 1980s. As such, many things led to the fall of the Soviet Union, and it happened over a far longer time than Reagan was president, and involved more players than the US against the USSR. In any case, his stance of aggression toward the USSR was forced into retreat late in his second term; Reagan agreed to several nuclear arms treaties with the more diplomatic Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev.

On other fronts (but particularly Central America), Reagan's Cold War included multiple forms of strategic support, including funds and arms, for rightwing dictators or guerillas in order to halt the advance of leftist reforms. (See **El Salvador, Nicaragua, Grenada and Guatemala.**) The CIA played a critical role in these wars – training death squads in the fine arts of assassination and destruction, manufacturing false "evidence" of arms flow from Cuba and the Soviet Union, inciting hostilities and sabotaging negotiations, planting mines in Nicaraguan harbors, and otherwise facilitating the torture and murder of hundreds of thousands of civilians.

Corruption

In his 1991 book *Sleepwalking Through History: America in the Reagan Years*, Haynes Johnson came up with an unflattering statistic marking the Reagan administration as the most corrupt (until now, perhaps) in US history: "By the end of his term, 138 Reagan administration officials had been convicted, had been indicted, or had been the subject of official investigations for official misconduct and/or criminal violations."

Deficit

During his presidency, the federal deficit more than tripled (almost $3 trillion in 1988), even as funding for domestic and international social programs and humanitarian efforts were slashed. See **Reaganomics.**

Deinstitutionalization

James W. Trent, Jr., author of *Inventing the Feeble Mind*, wrote, "In January 1967, Ronald W. Reagan, the newly elected California governor, ordered all state agencies to eliminate 10 percent of what he characterized as 'fat' from their budgets. More specifically, he insisted that state hospitals and institutions for the retarded cut their budgets by $17 million. This cut, Reagan insisted, would eliminate 3,700 state jobs, close fourteen state-operated outpatient clinics, and begin a process of community-based care, with communities taking greater responsibility for the guardianship of their 'mental patients.' Angered by reaction to his proposals, Reagan remarked that state hospitals (and prisons) constituted the 'biggest hotel chain in the state.'" The deinstitutionalization of state hospitals, and the failure of "community-based care" to materialize in the absence of adequate funding, led to the abandonment of many mentally ill patients. Many found themselves homeless, a condition for which Reagan had even less sympathy.

> In 1986, Reagan is reported to have said to cabinet officials, "Why not invite Q'addafi to San Francisco, he likes to dress up so much? Why don't we give him AIDS?"

Deregulation

During his administration, his White House sought to deregulate industry restrictions on monopolies and health codes. Restrictions on media consolidation, air pollution, and corporate liability for workers' compensation, among other protections, were loosened or abolished under the Reagan administration. The after-effects of deregulation continue to reverberate in the corporatization of media outlets (resulting in near monopolies in multiple markets) and price gouging by Enron during the 2001 energy crisis.

Domestic Surveillance

In 1987, the *Boston Globe* discovered that the FBI had mounted a nationwide surveillance effort against churches and human rights groups that had housed and provided for refugees fleeing wars (many of which were exacerbated or encouraged by the US) in Central America. In some cases, the FBI had broken into churches associated with this Sanctuary movement and stolen or copied files. See **COINTELPRO.**

Education

During his 1980 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan promised to abolish the Department of Education as one more example of "big government." Though he apparently made no effort to keep this promise, he did cut funding for school lunches for lower-income children (see **Ketchup**) and voiced support for a constitutional amendment decreeing mandatory prayer in public schools. He also supported tax-exempt status for Bob Jones University, a Christian college that practiced racial segregation and mandated against "miscegenation" (see **Bob Jones**). In 1983, Reagan went so far as to suggest that one cause of the decline in public education was schools' efforts to comply with court-ordered desegregation. He went on to blame federal support for public education for the sinking economy: "We think there is a parallel between federal involvement in education and the decline in profit over recent years."

El Salvador

U.S. funded and trained death squads and their government sponsors in El Salvador, which had been fighting a civil war against leftist guerillas (Farabunda Marti National Liberation Front, FMLN). This civil war killed tens of thousands of Salvadorans, as well as a number of human rights activists (including, infamously, several American nuns). As a puppet president, Alfredo Cristiani often yielded to ARENA founder Roberto D'Aubuisson, D'Aubuisson, a former Army Major with ties to Jesse Helms and the U.S. right, once told European journalists, "You Germans were very intelligent. You realized that the Jews were responsible for the spread of communism, so you killed them." U.S. State Department cables indicate D'Aubuisson "planned and ordered the assassination of the late Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero." In 1989 six priests were slain and Cristiani soon admitted his U.S. trained soldiers had committed the murders. Yet, although assassinations of priests are notable, 70,000 other civilians have been killed by the Salvadoran military and the death squads since 1980.

Environment

In 1981, the year he assumed the presidency, Reagan argued, "Trees cause more pollution than automobiles do." With this bizarre pronouncement, the Reagan White House began their assault on the environment and related health issues, seeking to loosen restrictions of the Clean Air Act on behalf of industry. Related measures to reduce the responsibility of corporations and the federal government to maintaining health or environmental protections were sponsored throughout the eight years of the Reagan administration. Also under the Reagan administration, the Environmental Protection Agency under Anne Gorsuch Burford was regularly accused of political favoritism and mismanagement. Reagan's contempt for environmental regulation led to the appointment of dishonest, incompetent people who coddled polluters instead of curbing them. Dozens of them were forced to resign in disgrace, after criminal and congressional investigations, and several went to prison. Head of the EPA's waste management program, Rita Lavelle, was convicted of lying to Congress and obstructing a congressional inquiry into the agency's handling of a toxic waste dump. A rabid anti-environmentalist and one of Reagan's most controversial appointees, Secretary of the Interior James Watt drastically increased logging and mining on federal lands and did little to enforce the environmental protections

passed in the 1970s during his tenure in office. See **Watt, James.**

Grenada

In 1982, in an effort to demonstrate US power just two days after Hizbullah guerillas in Beirut killed over 200 Marines, Reagan sent troops to invade and occupy the Caribbean island of Grenada on the pretext that it was about to fall under the influence of Castro's Cuba and to "rescue" a number of American medical students.

Guatemala

The Reagan administration continued to provide support for decades of counterinsurgency war begun under the rightwing regime installed by a US-led coup (sponsored on behalf of the United Fruit corporation, and embodying the term "banana republic") against the elected government in 1954. In *The Nation* (9 March 2000), Eric Alterman writes, "[Guatemala's] official Historical Clarification Commission charged its own government with a campaign of 'genocide' in murdering roughly 200,000 people, mainly Mayan Indians, during its dictatorial reign of terror. The commission's nine-volume 1999 report singled out the US role in aiding this 'criminal counterinsurgency.' The violence in Guatemala reached a gruesome climax in the early eighties under the dictatorship of the born-again evangelical, Gen. Efraín Ríos Mont. Nine hundred thousand people were forcibly relocated and entire villages leveled. As army helicopters strafed a caravan of 40,000 unarmed refugees seeking to escape to Mexico, Reagan chose that moment to congratulate Ríos Montt for his dedication to democracy, adding that he had been getting 'a bum rap' from liberals in Congress and the media. His Administration soon provided as much aid to the killers as Congress would allow." According to Amnesty International, "arbitrary arrest, torture, 'disappearance' and political killings were everyday realities" for Guatemalans during decades of U.S. financed military dictatorship. Altogether, Americas Watch says, tens of thousands were killed and government death squads destroyed 400 villages during Reagan's term in office.

Haiti

In 1981, Reagan signed an executive order directing the US Coast Guard to intercept boats carrying Haitian refugees fleeing the tyrannical Duvalier regime and tow them back to Port-au-Prince. Those who did reach the US were deported or indefinitely detained in guarded camps, which also held thousands of Central American refugees fleeing the rightwing regimes Reagan supported.

Homelessness

During his two terms, Reagan's social and economic policies plunged millions of Americans into poverty; and many of them into homelessness. In January 1984, Reagan appeared on *Good Morning America*, defending his administration against charges of callousness: "You can't help those who simply will not be helped. One problem that we've had, even in the best of times, is people who are sleeping on the grates, the homeless who are homeless, you might say, by choice." In another televised interview with David Brinkley in December 1988, Reagan again dismissed homelessness by saying that a "large percentage" of homeless were "retarded" people who had voluntarily left institutions that would have cared for them. He failed to note that as California governor and as President, he drastically cut funding for and closed many of those mental health institutions, forcing patients into the streets and denying access to those who followed.

Honduras

Honduras was the original "Banana Republic," its history intertwined with that of the U.S.-based United Fruit Company. But in 1979, when Anastasio Somoza was overthrown in Nicaragua, Honduras got a new nickname: "The Pentagon Republic." In 1981, Reagan authorized the first US commitment of aid to the Contras—$19 million to help Argentina train an anti-Sandinista military force in Honduras. The hope was to force a war between Honduras and Nicaragua, and thus provide a pretext for US military intervention and the overthrow of the socialist Sandinista government. In exchange for harboring the Contras, Reagan promised Honduras both US military and economic aid. Honduran General Gustava Alvarez assisted in these training programs and founded a special "hit squad," the Cobras. Victims of the Cobras were stripped, bound, thrown into pits and tortured. The Reagan Administration claimed ignorance of these human rights violations, but U.S. advisors have

since admitted knowledge.

Iran/Contra

After Congress cut off funding for the rightwing Contras, the Reagan White House looked to other illegal means of raising funds to continue to run the insurgency. They came up with a complicated plan of stealing Pentagon equipment, shipping it to Khomeini in Iran, illegally taking payment from Iran for the weaponry, and then giving the money to the rightwing guerrillas in Central America. At the same time, they pressured Khomeini to get US hostages in Lebanon, taken by radical Shiites there, released. With the Iran/Contra deal, the Reagan White House had both subverted the Constitution and avoided Congressional oversight, both of which are gross violations of democratic principles. It led to the dismissal of the president's national security adviser, John M. Poindexter, and Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North, the National Security Council staff aide accused of masterminding the diversion. Reagan handpicked an appointed committee to determine his culpability in Iran/Contra; the committee, of course, declared him "innocent" of any knowledge of the deal-making. And in one of the more bizarre statements of his presidency, Reagan said, "A few months ago, I told the American people I did not trade arms for hostages. My heart and my best intentions still tell me that's true, but the facts and evidence tell me it is not."

Iraq (Saddam Hussein)

Reagan armed and funded Saddam Hussein, a US ally who had invaded Iran in 1980.Despite the fact that Iraq was then on the official list of terrorist nations, in 1982 U.S. support began flowing to Baghdad, including precursor chemicals for chemical weapons. In 1988, Hussein attacked Iraqi Kurds with chemical weapons, gassing 5,000 to death in the city of Halabja. After this attack, there were moves both internationally and in Congress to issue protests and sanctions. For instance, in September 1988, the US Senate passed the Prevention of Genocide Act, which would have imposed sanctions on the Hussein regime. Immediately, the Reagan administration announced its opposition to the bill, calling it "premature." When Congress passed the bill, the White House did not implement it. While senior US officials in the second Bush administration touted the 1995 attack as one of the main reasons for the 2003 invasion of Iraq, just four months after the attack, the *New York Times* reported that, according to "senior military officers with direct knowledge of the program," even though "senior officials of the Reagan administration publicly condemned Iraq's employment of mustard gas, sarin, VX and other poisonous agents ... President Reagan, vice president George Bush [Senior] and senior national security aides never withdrew their support for the highly classified program in which more than 60 officers of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) were secretly providing detailed information on Iranian deployments, tactical planning for battles, plans for air strikes and bomb-damage assessments for Iraq." (August 17, 2002)

Ketchup

In an effort to dodge criticisms of his administration's plans to cut funding for federal programs providing school lunches for poor children, a Reagan administration official in the Department of Agriculture famously claimed that ketchup was a vegetable and thus an adequate nutritional serving.

Kirkpatrick, Jeane

Reagan appointed Jeane Kirkpatrick, then nominally a Democrat, UN ambassador and gave her cabinet status. He had been impressed with Kirkpatrick since he read her famous 1980 article called "Dictatorships and Double Standards," which argued that it was necessary for the United States to distinguish between rightwing "authoritarian" regimes and leftist "totalitarian" regimes, and to support the former against the latter. This position became policy under Reagan. Kirkpatrick was a neoconservative ideologue, and was considered a diplomatic menace by the pragmatists in the administration.

Lebanon

The Reagan administration supported, or at least did not actively oppose, Israel's 1982 invasion (under the direction of Defense Minister Ariel Sharon) of Lebanon. He viewed Israel as a strategic bulwark against Soviet intervention in the Middle East. He twice deployed troops as ostensible "peacekeepers" to Lebanon on behalf of diplomatic goals, with the second mission resulting in a terrorist attack on a Marine barracks that claimed more American lives than any one engagement in the Vietnam War. Reagan largely avoided political damage for this attack, however, with the invasion of Grenada two days after the bombing in Beirut, providing a "victory" against imagined "communist insurrection" to counter the loss of American life elsewhere.

Libya

Reagan blamed Libya for a 1986 bombing of a Berlin disco that killed one US solider and one civilian. He then ordered bombings of two Libyan cities that killed 200 people, far more than in the disco bombing. In 1986, Reagan is also reported to have said to cabinet officials, "Why not invite Q'addafi to San Francisco, he likes to dress up so much? Why don't we give him AIDS?"

Meese, Ed

You couldn't really go to a punk show in the 80s without someone wearing a "Meese is a Pig!" shirt. What did Reagan's Attorney General do to deserve the hatred of the punks? Try and think of him as the John Ashcroft of his time, only a little more of a bumbler and without so much of the constitution already dismantled. Under the Reagan administration, for example, the first laws were introduced that allowed the government to seize property of people *suspected* of dealing drugs.

He was ethically questionable, an independent prosecutor found that he "probably violated the criminal law" four times while in office and eventually he was forced to resign, but corrupt politicians are run of the mill. It was his quotes that make his memory live on. For example, was the administration anti-poor? Ed Meese said, "I don't know of any authoritative figures that there are hungry children. I've heard a lot of anecdotal stuff, but I haven't heard any authoritative figures…I think some people are going to soup kitchens voluntarily. I know we've had considerable information that people go to soup kitchens because the food is free and that that's easier than paying for it…I think that they have money."

Food for thought on Christmas? "Ebenezer Scrooge suffered from bad press in his time. If you really look at the facts, he didn't exploit Bob Cratchit. Bob Cratchit was paid 10 shillings a week, which was a very good wage at the time… Bob, in fact, had good cause to be happy with his situation. His wife didn't have to work…He was able to afford the traditional Christmas dinner of roast goose and plum pudding…So let's be fair to Scrooge. He had his faults, but he wasn't unfair to anyone."

How do you win the war on drugs? Spy on your workers in "locker rooms, parking lots, shipping and mail room areas and even the nearby taverns" to try to catch them using drugs.

And let's not forget the Meese Commission. 2000 pages of the most prurient documents ever entered into the congressional record. They were attacking porn, but many of those testifying seemed to enjoy discussing it just a little too much, if you know what I mean.

National Endowment for the Arts.

Surprisingly, NEA funding didn't get cut during Reagan's tenure. Though his administration attacked the NEA's funding, it wasn't until Bush Sr.'s presidency that it began to shrink. Still, eight years of attack under his administration lead to the eventual reduction in arts funding lead by Jesse Helms. Another example of something once seen as nearly untouchable that Reagan's cultural revolution eventually weakened or ended.

New Deal

President Reagan claimed, during a 1981 PBS interview, that New Deal proponents actually "espoused" fascism. Reagan viewed the social protections enacted by the New Deal, including Social Security and other benefits to the poor and elderly, as "evils" that he sought to redress during the course of his Presidency. Many of his plans to dismantle the AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and other social services were later implemented by both Bush administrations and the Clinton administration.

Nicaragua

After a 1979 national revolution ousted the US-backed dictatorship of Antonio Somoza and the socialist Sandinistas came to power, Reagan began contacting right-wing Contra rebels during his 1980 presidential campaign. Once elected, Reagan began funneling funds and arms to the Contras in their counterinsurgency efforts. The US also worked to actively undermine and sabotage regional negotiations and, in Nicaragua, between the Sandinistas and Contras, using CIA covert activities. CIA training manuals included instructions for civilian coercion and assassination, and sabotage of clinics, mass transit, and other public buildings. The Reagan administration also promoted an unprecedented military build-up and came close to provoking warfare between Nicaragua and Honduras on the pretext of Sandinista "incursions."

In January 1984, the CIA manufactured and laid mines in Sandino harbor in Nicaragua. In April, when it was disclosed that the CIA had conducted the action, a Senate resolution condemned the mining and both Houses voted to deny all funding to the Contras. The Sandanistas took their case to the International Court of Justice in the Hague (popularly known as the World Court) and won, though the administration refused in advance to recognize the court's jurisdiction. In response to Congress' refusal to continue funding the

Contras, the Reagan administration devised a plan to sell arms to Iran and divert the profits to the Contras. See **Iran-Contra**.

Panama

In the 1980s the Reagan-Bush White House protected elements of the Panamanian cocaine-smuggling network, dominated by Medellin cartel, in exchange for logistic and monetary support in the secret war against the Sandinistas. Dictator General Manuel Noriega engineered a scheme to keep the cartel, the DEA and the Reagan White House simultaneously happy. Through his intelligence arm, Noriega was familiar with the drug trade throughout the Caribbean, especially those elements in direct competition with the Medellin cartel. He fingered those miscreants for the DEA, and the DEA easily made the appropriate arrests. The Cartel was rid of the competition, the DEA got credit for the busts, and the White House had use of Panama as a staging base for covert operations against Nicaragua. Eventually Noriega refused to participate in further anti-Sandinista actions. In 1987, a Miami grand jury indicted him for drug trafficking and the CIA tried to destabilize his regime. The December 1989 invasion of Panama led to world condemnation. Noriega eventually surrendered to face U.S. drug charges, but under the guise of apprehending one drug dealer, the invasion led to over 1,000 Panamanian deaths and installed a regime with similar close links to drugs, plus a willingness to alter Panama Canal treaties to suit U.S. interests.

Philippines

During his presidency, Reagan supported the corrupt and discredited despot Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines. (In 1981, Vice President George H. Bush visited Manila, and praised Marcos for "adherence to democratic principles and to the democratic process." When Marcos stole the 1986 election, President Reagan stated that he was "encouraged" by evidence of a "two party system in the Philippines," apparently even if only one was allowed to win. Later, he was forced by administration officials to issue a public plea calling for Marcos to resign.

Poverty

Under Reagan's economic and domestic policies, which included cuts to social services and welfare programs, millions of Americans were plunged into poverty. In a 1984 press conference, President Reagan claimed that "not one single fact of figure" backs up Democratic "demagoguery" that his budget cuts have hurt the poor. The next morning, a congressional study reports that cuts in welfare had pushed more than 500,000 people—the majority of them children—into poverty. In 1986, Reagan told a group of students, "I don't believe that there is anyone that is going hungry in America simply by reason of denial or lack of ability to feed them. It is by people not knowing where or how to get this help." Critics noted that the Reagan administration eliminated the program that informed needy people of available benefits.

Reaganomics

In a Salon.com essay called "The rich got richer," James K. Galbraith writes, "Supply-side economics [the premise of "Reaganomics"] held that the rich would work harder if they were taxed less, while the poor would work harder if they were taxed more. Monetarism held that interest rates should go as high as necessary to kill inflation. This combination proved toxic in 1981-82 as the economy imploded. But the effects were even worse abroad. There, high interest rates stalled world development and triggered crises across Latin America and Africa and in much of Asia. Around the developing world, imports and living standards crumbled. So did fragile public education and health services—just in time for the global AIDS epidemic. Full recovery never occurred in many parts of the world. But no supply-side effects were ever observed here at home, and the poor still work harder than the rich."

Religious Right

Reagan actively courted the Religious Right during the 1980s, and brought them under the GOP umbrella with his promises to constitutionally mandate prayer in schools and eventually outlaw abortion. Though some argue that these promises were political, and not meant to be carried through, Reagan nonetheless brought the issues of the Religious Right to the mainstream of American national politics, and shifted the political "center" further to the right. As a result, the Religious Right maintains a vocal and powerful presence in the Republican Party to this day.

Rust Belt

In the early eighties tens of thousands of workers lost their jobs as factories in the upper Midwest shut down forever. Reagan presided over the de-industrialization of America and the increasing transnationalism of capital. Big corporations found cheaper workers elsewhere, increased their profits and communities and unions were destroyed forever. Reagan, of course, didn't cause this by himself but did little to affect the damage wrought. Except of course for changing definitions of unemployment so that laid off workers would stop getting counted after a certain period of time.

Savings and Loan Scandal (S&L Scandal)

Savings-and-loan deregulation was another Reagan initiative, spearheaded by a task force led by Vice President George H.W. Bush. This resulted in a wave of criminal takeovers, leading to failures that ultimately cost taxpayers over $150 billion and resulted in more than 1,000 felony convictions.

Scalia, Antonin

A Reagan appointee to the Supreme Court, Antonin Scalia remains the most rightwing extremist to sit on the Court since before the New Deal era in the 1930s. He helped to engineer the Court's conservative turn towards "states' rights" in the 1990s. He continues to appose affirmative action and support the death penalty, three-strike laws, and sodomy laws against homosexuals.

Social Welfare

While universal programs affecting everyone, like Social Security, could not be outright dismantled for political reasons (though Reagan did hope to privatize Social Security), means-tested programs designed for the poor suffered drastic cuts. Applying his philosophical and ideological beliefs that the poor chose, or otherwise deserved, their fate, millions lost welfare, Medicaid, SSI and food stamps. Benefits were reduced for millions more. The deepest cuts came in programs that invested in education and employment skills, such as job training, which was cut by more than half. Other cuts, amounting to at least ten percent of former amounts, affected mass transportation and house and urban development.

Star Wars

The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), or Star Wars, was Reagan's plan to develop a space-based missile defense laser system over the US to shield the country from any incoming enemy missiles. The scientifically unfeasible project cost $1 trillion ($3.7 billion in 1989 alone), but was never actually completed. George Lucas vociferously objected to the appropriation and misuse of the term "star wars."

Unemployment

Until the second Bush administration, jobless rates under Reagan were the highest since the Great Depression, with the unemployed at times constituting over 10% of the population. Reagan saw no need to address these jobless rates at the federal level, seeing them instead as further proof of the evils of a "social safety net." In November 1982, the White House even announced a proposal to tax unemployment benefits.

United Nations

Setting an example for the second Bush administration, the Reagan administration consistently thumbed its nose at international law and cooperation. It withdrew the United States from UNESCO; cut off US contributions to the UN Fund for Population Activities; and cast the single vote against a World Health Organization code for infant formula (which US pharmaceutical corporations had been testing on Third World populations without controls or liability for resulting illness or damage).

Vietnam

In 1965, as then-governor of California, Ronald Reagan said, "It's silly talking about how many years we will have to spend in the jungles of Vietnam when we could pave the whole country and put parking strips on it, and be home by Christmas." Reagan also coined the term "Vietnam syndrome," which he used to describe a national psychological flaw—the unwillingness to unilaterally invade other sovereign nations at will. After the 1991 Gulf War, however, George H. Bush declared the "Vietnam syndrome" defeated.

War on Drugs

In 1986, the Reagans, seated on their living room couch, urged a "national crusade" against "the cancer of drugs." The President cut funding for anti-drug programs immediately after the upcoming election, and under his administration, a draconian "war on drugs" was launched, incarcerating millions for minor drug offenses, even as the CIA continued to support drug empires in Central and South America.

Watt, James

Former Secretary of the Interior, James Watt favored virtually unlimited development of public lands and deployed the resources available to him to this end, saying, "We will mine more, drill more, cut more timber." Congress blocked many of his proposals, including the transfer of strip-mining controls from the federal to state governments and coal-leasing. Increasingly a political liability during his tenure, he was forced to resign after stating at a breakfast speech to the US Chamber of Commerce, "We have every kind of mix you can have. I have a black, I have a woman, two Jews and a cripple. And we have talent."

Welfare Queen

In 1976, Reagan coined the term "welfare queen" to create a vicious stereotype about poor black women. Used as an example of the "failed" welfare system, this Chicago black woman had "eighty names, thirty addresses, twelve Social Security cards and is collecting veterans' benefits on four nonexisting deceased husbands.... Her tax-free cash income alone is over $150,000."

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING:

Salon.com, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, Alternet.org, Commondreams.org, Juancole.com, are some of the sources that contributed to this primer.

Other sources included: Lou Cannon, *President Reagan: A Role of a Lifetime*; Garry Willis, *Reagan's America: Innocents at Home*; Frances Fitzgerald, *Way Out There in the Blue*; Eric Alterman, *When Presidents Lie*; Matthew Evangelista's *Unarmed Forces*; Michael Weiler and W. Barnett Pearce, eds., *Reagan and Public Discourse in America*; Thomas W. Walker, ed., *Reagan versus the Sandinistas: The Undelcared War on Nicaragua*; Randy Shilts, *And The Band Played On*; and Michael Rogin, *Ronald Reagan, The Movie*.

LEATHE

Leatherface! Where does one start? Jerry A once said if he ever wrote a song as good as "Peasant In Paradise" he'd quit Poison Idea as his goal in life would be accomplished and coming from a source like that, it's no idle comment. Leatherface are another fine example of Sunderland's rich punk culture. Bonding over their shared love of Gordon Smith guitars, Dickie Hammond and Frankie Stubbs formed the band together with drummer Andrew Laing in the late eighties to release the hardcore classic *Cheery Knowle* LP that was eagerly followed by the marginally superior and the band's finest moment to date *Fill Your Boots*. Bring a major label into the equation and watch it all fall apart after the release of the critically acclaimed *Mush* and poorly received follow up *Minx*. The band went their separate ways with Frankie forming Pope and Jesse as well as performing the odd solo gig. Dickie resurfaced with Dr. Bison, whilst Lainey filled vacant drummer slots for the likes of Cockney Rejects, Angelic Upstarts and Red Alert. Whilst still inactive as a band the legend of Leatherface continued to grow with a whole crop of new bands springing up pledging allegiance to Sunderland's finest export, which inevitably lead to the reformation of the group, inexplicably minus Dickie Hammond, though it was his idea for the group to reform. An alliance with America's B.Y.O. Records was formed to release a split album with Hot Water Music alongside their first full length in seven years, *Horsebox*. This years *Dog Disco* LP is the latest chapter in the Leatherface's story and that's where this interview takes up. Hot on the heels of it's release the band crossed the Irish sea for a handful of dates around the country, following which Frankie Stubbs sat down with me to reflect on all things that surround Leatherface. Interview by Cian Hynes from *Riot 77* fanzine.

MRR: How did the Irish dates go?

Frankie: The Irish dates went alright apart from Cork.

MRR: What happened there?

Frankie: Uhhhh, I dunno, you know. Like every fuckin' band just runs over time and we end up only having twenty minutes to play. We played six songs and had to get off. Curfew was half past eleven and the promoter was so fuckin' useless that he thought we would play for forty minutes so if the band before us finished at ten to eleven then that would be fine, you know? But what he didn't seem to realize and allow for was that bands tend to run over time and you've got to at least tune your guitars and the rest of it, you know? But you come across this sort of thing. It doesn't matter.

MRR: Would you go through that promoter again?

Frankie: I don't think so. That was our third date of the tour. We played Belfast first and that was alright, apart from the fact that there wasn't a bar and it was freezing fuckin' cold. Dublin was really good and Limerick was really good as usual.

MRR: I was surprised at your set list the other night in Dublin, didn't exactly play all the classics did ya?

Frankie: Well we've got new stuff.

RFACE

MRR: You want people to focus on the here n' now?
Frankie: Well that's the whole point in touring, you go on tour to play your new stuff. In the few gigs that we've played in the last three years, because its been three years since our last record, we were criticized for doing an almost greatest hits fuckin' thing. People would be coming up going, "have you not got any new stuff?" and I'd say "Aye we do, but no reason to play it yet." And now that we're on tour and half the set is absolutely brand new, people are going "You don't play much of the old stuff?" Bands cannot win (laughs).

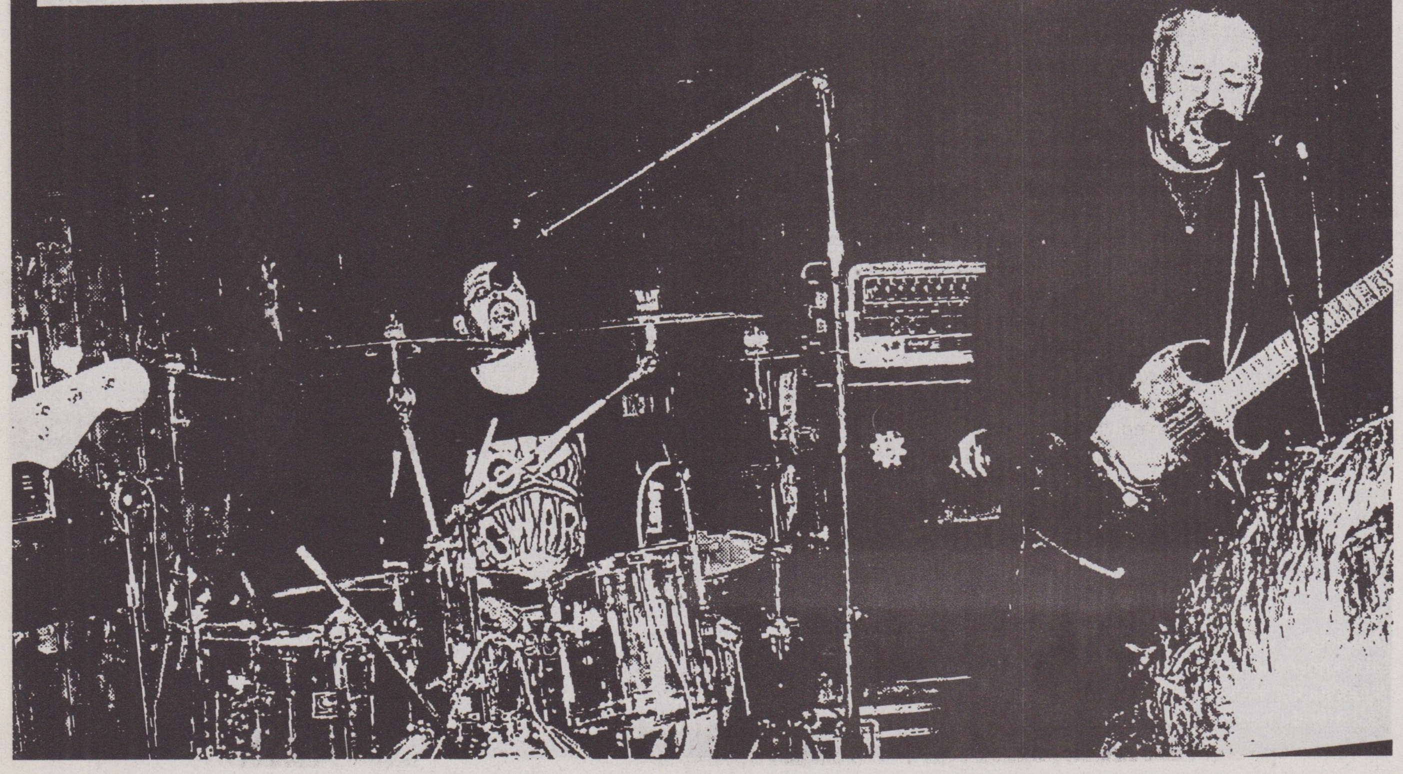
MRR: Do you juggle the set around a lot? Does this line up know most of the songs?
Frankie: I dunno, Leatherface must have about a hundred songs and I'd say we can comfortably play about thirty of them. I couldn't play most of them. Some songs we've never played them live, it's ten years and I mean they were made up in a three month period, recorded in a week and we haven't played them since. I defy any band to play every song that they've ever written; it's just impossible. Some of them I can't even remember how I played them. It's got to be the same for every band. When we sit and practice, we'd have to go though a hundred songs, which is not going to happen, you know? You do forget them.

MRR: Are you taking requests now from people at these gigs or have you just got a strict set list that you stick to?
Frankie: Oh, of course we're taking requests. Because with the old stuff, we have a few of the songs written into the set list, but if people are shouting for a certain one, we'll throw out the old one we had in there and replace it with the one they're shouting for. We had a problem in Dublin where people were shouting for this song. I think we must have played it about twice live and it's a B-Side of a 7".

MRR: "Dreaming?"
Frankie: Yeah "Dreaming." I sort of played the first verse with just guitar and vocals and apologized and the girl was almost in tears (laughs). For fuck's sake, you know? (laughs).

MRR: What have most people been shouting for on this tour, mainly the *Mush* stuff I'd imagine?
Frankie: There's a fair bit of the *Mush* stuff, aye. Very little from before that, depending on the age. Last night actually there was these three old guys that must have been the same age as me, shouting for "Peasant In Paradise. "

MRR: That's the stuff now. I think "Fill Your Boots" is the best Leatherface.
Frankie: Yeah, that song has been a regular for a long time, you know, so we can do that one. Every tour there's people shouting for songs and we'll usually at some point go away, maybe at a sound check or something, and practice that song, so then the next gig you'll play it, but don't you know then there's someone shouting for a different one (laughs) and you can't do them. If we did all the ones that people were shouting for, then you'd get other people shouting for the ones that we normally did. What we normally do now is mix it up a bit and because we don't sit down at the start of a tour and work out a set list, what we end up doing is just putting the set in order as we make our way



though the tour. We'll only replace old ones with other old ones. We won't replace something off *Dog Disco* for an old one and end up becoming some greatest hits type band, you know?

MRR: This is quite a lengthy tour. I was just looking at the dates there.

Frankie: It will be, yeah. There should be another two months added on to the end. America is still missing, which is being sorted out as we speak. It will be about five or six months on the road.

MRR: Do you enjoy that now, or do you feel it's a necessary evil?

Frankie: It's hard to say. I am enjoying it and starting to get into it more and more each day. I'm getting into the flow. But I really didn't want to come away and that's the thing with me; I just don't want to go anywhere (laughs). I got married a month ago and I've got a two year old girl, so I've got the whole family thing now and I really like it, you know?

MRR: You always said you'd never get married!

Frankie: Ah, I know mate, that's the thing, never say never. I know I said that and I thought that I never would, but then you meet someone that turns your world upside down, you know. Our daughter turns my world upside down every day, and that's going to be the hardest thing now, you know? I'm a real family man now, you know? (laughs)

MRR: Do you work full time n' all now?

Frankie: I work in a recoding studio.

MRR: Oh, you've still got that have you?

Frankie: No, not that one. I work in another one. I don't have to put up with the stress of maintaining gear and getting things fixed. I just turn up and record the band and then sod off home.

MRR: What happened your own one?

Frankie: I just lost interest in the whole thing. It was partly to do with the building it was in. It was a collectively run thing that was becoming more not collectively run, if you know what I mean? We had to pay the bills and we stopped getting grant-aid and stuff like that. I just had to get out, there was no collective thing going on there.

MRR: Was that in your house?

Frankie: No, it wasn't in my house (laughs), it was in this building that we'd had for years.

MRR: Who was in it with you, just friends?

Frankie: It started off as just friends, yeah, but by the end I didn't really have any friends in there. The fact that I'd been in there that long pissed them off. They'd be like "We're in a financial crises!" and I'd say, "Well, we've been in financial crises before!" and they're like, "Oh, doesn't he know it all?" type shit, you know, and I just couldn't be fuckin' bothered with it. I've been involved in that Sunderland Musicians Collective for twenty fuckin' years you know and then some new people came in. I just fuckin' walked out and when I left they did ask me if I had any advice. Any advice would be helpful! (laughs)

MRR: Is that still going?

Frankie: Nah, it's fucked now. About a year after I went it shut completely and got bought out. Typical Thatcher-ism politics. It got bought out by two boys who run it exactly the same as it was always run, but there's only two of them. They haven't got this entire group of people, who all have different goals.

MRR: You've never come across as the kind of person who enjoys doing interviews or promoting your band, is that fair to say?

Frankie: Aye! I write songs, you know? That's my thing. I did a lot of interviews and then stopped doing them and now I've started doing them again and I have been quite enjoying it and that's the odd thing. Because they do make you think. I think everybody should be sat down and asked what they think about a subject, because it's a very healthy thing to do. Has anybody ever sat you down and asked what do you think about this or what are you doing with your life? It makes you actually stop and be like, well, what the fuck *do* I think? People go through their entire lives without ever realizing what they think. You should get someone close to you to write out fifteen questions and sit you down in a pub and ask you them and you'll find its a healthy thing. You do stop and think about what is important in your life.

MRR: Do you think that's part of the appeal for a lot of people with Leatherface, that you come across as being really humble and not giving a fuck about all of this?

Frankie: I wouldn't say we don't give a fuck about anything, we care about a lot, but I'd say we don't care about all that commercialism of the whole thing. I don't know if that's why people like Leatherface, that's an interesting question. I would like us to be considered quite an honest band. Politically we aren't going to change the world, we aren't even likely to write the best song that's ever been written, we just do what we do without any of the pretensions.

MRR: Would they be the sort of bands that you'd be attracted to yourself?

Frankie: I don't know if I would ever get to hear that type of band, because the music industry now is all about selling yourself. Have you ever heard The Pop Group?

MRR: Sure.

Frankie: They've got a line that goes "We're all prostitutes and that's what it's all about." It's all about selling your soul to the devil, if you consider record companies to be the devil. I'm not into that sort of. I'm not very good at standing up and saying I'm fuckin' amazing me! I find it really fuckin' funny when people come up to me and say, "You're fuckin' shit!" I go, "I know," you know? I find it much harder when people go, "You are fuckin' amazing!" (laughs) I sort of shy away from that, because it's easy for me. But "You are fuckin' shit," tell me something I don't know...(laughs)

MRR: You ended up on Atlantic Records for a while though, so what was that all like?

Frankie: We knew nothing about it. What it was, was we were on Roughneck Records at the time and they did some deal with Atlantic. In fact it was Seed Records, which is a subsidiary of Atlantic. We knew nothing about it, that was a record company deal. So whenever I would phone up Seed to see what was happening with something it was like, "Hello, Atlantic Records" and I'd be like "Oh! sorry, I've got the wrong number, I thought it was Seed" and they'd go, "Yeah, you're in the right building, hang on and we'll just put you through." It was a load of fuckin' rubbish really.

MRR: How was your deal with Roughneck? I heard they made a lot of money off Leatherface.

Frankie: I think they might have. We don't know. See, what they tell you is how many records they've sold, but now I know from an insider how many they pressed and they're supposed to pay the band on how many pressed, not how many they've sold. All the Leatherface records on Roughneck have since been deleted. I know how many they pressed and now they're all gone and I think they did make a few quid alright. But, so what, they'll go to hell..

MRR: I've got the initial vinyl eight song pressing of that Roughneck *Fill Your Boots* record, but I was always surprised that it never got a proper CD release or received the push you're other records did, 'cos every song on that is just amazing.

Frankie: Yeah, I dunno, maybe because it's like a mini-album and the proper *Fill Your Boots* is only eight songs long. Then when is was brought out again on CD it also had the first single on there as extra tracks and then when it came out in Japan it had something like eighteen songs on it. It had the *Smoky Joe* record and the first single, along with the initial eight tracks, but to me *Fill Your Boots* is only eight songs. They packed it all onto one CD so they didn't have to release two records separately.

MRR: Right, so it did actually come out on CD?

Frankie: Yeah it did. One with twelve songs and another with eighteen. The vinyl is the real *Fill Your Boots* though.

MRR: Let's talk about the whole Rejected mess then, is that still a touchy subject? (laughs)

Frankie: It's not a touchy subject, it's a ridiculous subject. Mero is a complete nutter. Je's a fuckwit and I'm glad that when I came to Ireland that people have started to realize this, realized it to the point where he's fucked off to London where there's another load of suckers for him to take on.

MRR: Fucked off to London? I'm saying nothin'

Frankie: He's a fuckwit, but a clever one. I sent him a letter once and it was a personal letter from me to him, about seventeen pages long and it just said "Stop!" It went on for seventeen pages telling him why he should stop, because

he's a fuckin' disgrace. He fuckin' sent the letter around to people like he's almost fuckin' proud of it, you know? I was like, for fuck's sake, what the fuck are you doing man? This is a personal letter, you know? (laughs). So what I had to do was send him another letter telling him to stop sending my fuckin' letters out (laughs). There was a guy in Cork, I think it was, saying Mero's gonna get that letter and have it printed on a fuckin' t-shirt next (laughs). My god, as long as Mero never touches another Leatherface record again I'm happy, you know? There were people having bets on at the Dublin gig on whether he'd dare turn up (laughs), and I've got no doubt that he would dare turn up and offer us money for another Leatherface record.

MRR: What sort of a deal was that?

Frankie: He gave us £500 up front and for that he got the rights of *Cherry Knowle* for three years and the two discographies for three years.

MRR: I thought the discography with all the singles and rare stuff was really good, what was your problem with it?

Frankie: I didn't like what he done with *Cherry Knowle.* I don't really care about the discographies because they were all sort of little bits of demos that I had lying around. I just compiled them onto a D.A.T. and sent them to him, but how the man could. I mean *Cherry Knowle* isn't the best recorded record in the world and he managed to make it sound even worse. How can you make *Cherry Knowle* sound worse, man? (laughs). Jesus Christ, it sounds like he recorded it with woolly jumpers over the tops of the speakers or something, I dunno, he's a fuckin' nutter. and like the lyrics, I mean, I'll give the man his dues, he's dyslexic, right, and that's his excuse for all this. So why the fuck doesn't he get someone to help him, instead of printing two sets of the same lyrics? (laughs) I was reading them and half of them are missing. There was one song where half the lyrics were missing, but it's alright he printed them again somewhere else (laughs). get someone to give him a hand, you know?

MRR: I wanted to ask you about *Mush* for a second. What do you think it is about that album that people consistently come back to and sight as your all time best 'cos I personally think you've done better records than that. What do you think it is about that record that made it so popular with people?

Frankie: I honestly don't know man. I have no idea. It's not my favorite. I know it seems to be everybody else's favorite and it sickens me sometimes because I know that every record I do is gonna be compared to that one and no record is gonna compete with it for a lot of people. Probably nothing I ever do again will compete with it, which is depressing because I know it's not the best. There are better songs on other fuckin' records, records before and records after it. I don't hate the record, but I don't listen to it because the times when I have listened to it I just get annoyed. I was pissed when I fuckin' sang it, so I'm properly fuckin' shouting and that (laughs). I had the best part of a bottle of whiskey when I sang that. There's no subtlety to it.

MRR: What do you think is your best? I know you're particularly fond of *Minx*.

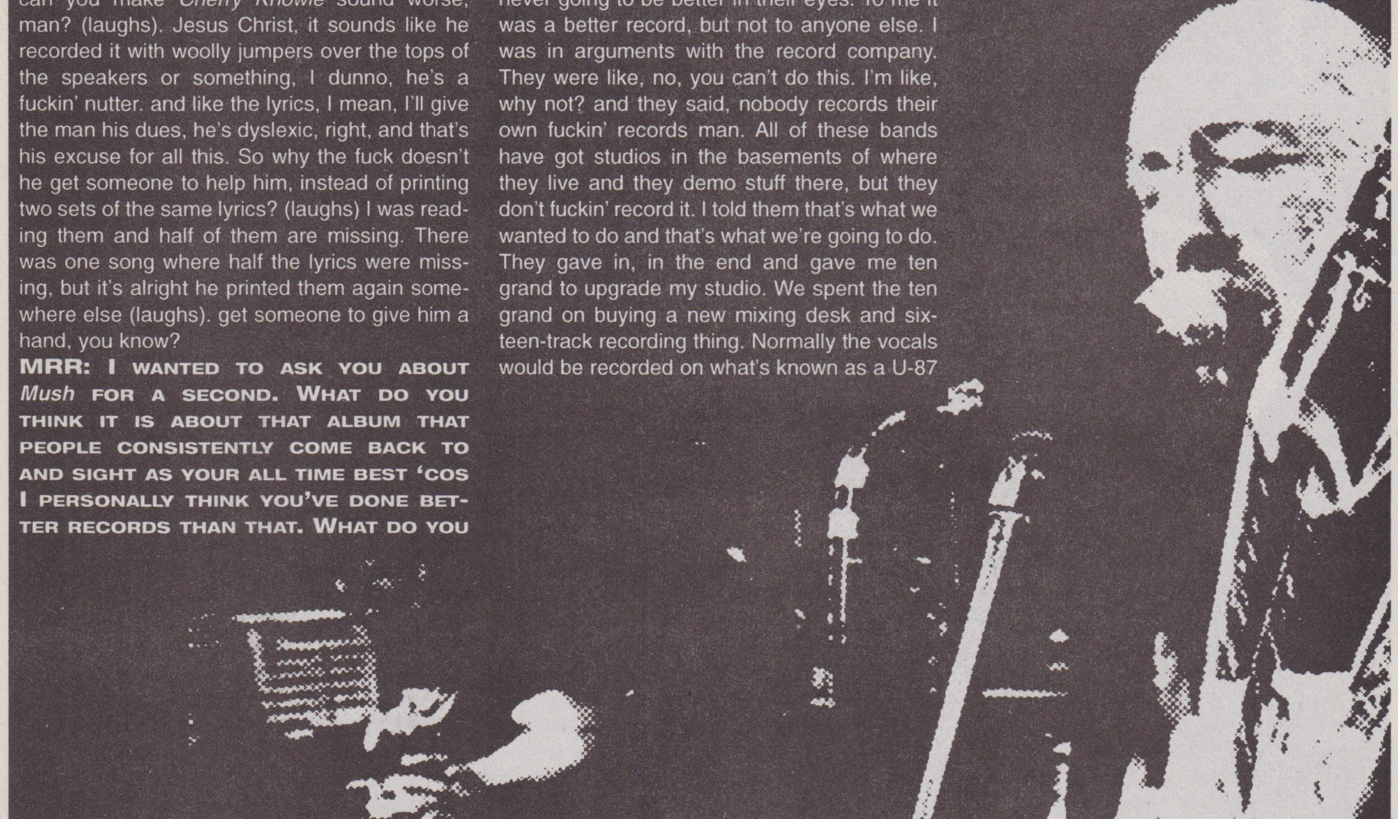
Frankie: My favorite is *Minx* yeah, because it was proper DIY We asked the record company how much money they were going to spend on the next record and they said about ten grand and I said give it to me! (laughs). I had an eight-track studio, we knocked it up to sixteen and recorded it ourselves, you know? That's my proudest moment because I knew that with all the good press *Mush* got and how much everybody liked it, I knew that the next record was never going to be better in their eyes. To me it was a better record, but not to anyone else. I was in arguments with the record company. They were like, no, you can't do this. I'm like, why not? and they said, nobody records their own fuckin' records man. All of these bands have got studios in the basements of where they live and they demo stuff there, but they don't fuckin' record it. I told them that's what we wanted to do and that's what we're going to do. They gave in, in the end and gave me ten grand to upgrade my studio. We spent the ten grand on buying a new mixing desk and sixteen-track recording thing. Normally the vocals would be recorded on what's known as a U-87 and the cheapest one you can get is about fifteen hundred quid. In fact, you'd pay fifteen hundred quid for one second hand. And we sang it down a thirty quid microphone; that's what the vocals on *Minx* are recorded on. That's punk rock right? We couldn't have done anything more punk rock than that and that's why I like it. The most punk rock bands in the world never done that, you know? I'd never do it again though. I've very little hair to start with, but I had none whatsoever after that. I even ripped my beard out. My pubes didn't stand a chance man (laughs).

MRR: The records you've put out since reforming have been quite a bit tamer. Do you just attribute that to getting older?

Frankie: Ah! Probably, yeah. I think vocally they're tamer because I don't think I can sing but I decided to put a little bit more thought into the singing, so there's more dynamics in the vocals. If you listen to *Mush* it's just Bark! Bark! Bark! the whole way through, there's not much subtlety on the vocals. Now I shut my eyes and just try to sing.

MRR: Did you find it difficult to replace Dickie and is that why you've reverted back to a three piece?

Frankie: We did bring in a second guitarist called Leighton Evans for *Horsebox* and also



for the split with Hot Water Music. *Dog Disco* is the first with just one guitarist. Actually there was that *Smoky Joe* record years ago that didn't have Dickie on it, because Dickie didn't really become a full-time member until *Mush*. He was playing with The Toy Dolls and stuff before becoming a full-time member of Leatherface. But *Dog Disco* is what I would say is the first album we've done with just the three people and we're more than happy now with that. We're probably happier now than we've eve been.

MRR: Do you generally like the sound of three-piece bands?

Frankie: Yeah, they're my favorite. I love them.

MRR: You were saying before that you're more into just individual songs than actual bands.

Frankie: I am, yeah. I think every band in the world has got a fuckin' great song. The thing about working in a recording studio is that I get to hear some of these. I take in and record bands that no one is ever going to fuckin' hear, but they've all got a good song, every single fuckin' one of them. They come in and just start playing and I recognize it from the first few fuckin' chords, you know. Then they'll say, this is our best song. I mean, bands that I like, they've all got shit songs. I wanna hear the good ones, you know, and some bands have more good ones than others.

MRR: You come across as the type of person who really just absorbs all kinds of music. Is that something that was around you a lot growing up? Do you come from a very musical family?

Frankie: (laughs) No, not at all, the first time I remember hearing music was when I played tennis for the school and "The Boys Are Back In Town" was out by Thin Lizzy and that was the first time I ever did anything musical. Playing The Boys Are Back In Town on my fuckin' tennis racket (laughs). I was about fourteen or so. (laughs)

MRR: I always thought The Ruts had a big influence on Leatherface's sound.

Frankie: When we first started I think every member of the band was a big Ruts fan. They were just fuckin' unique. the musicianship was amazing. Malcolm Owen's singing, he had that raspy voice of his. He was a real yob, but you could tell he was obviously a thinking man, you know? We all really liked The Ruts. I think their first album is up there with the best.

MRR: "Pale Moonlight" borrows a bit from "Staring At The Rude Boys" don't you think? (laughs)

Frankie: "Pale Moonlight" doesn't sound anything like "Staring At The Rude Boys" does it?

MRR: Get out of it, you know it does!

Frankie: No one has ever said that. I'm just tying to think of how they both go in my head now, because I love that Ruts song actually, but I don't see it. My favorite Ruts song was actually, "West One (Shine On Me)." That is a fuckin' beautiful pop song. But "Pale Moonlight" comes from that bit in Batman where he says, "Ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight?" (laughs) I was watching that one time and thought, I'll have that (laughs).

MRR: Have you ever covered a Ruts song?

Frankie: We have, aye. We used to always sound check with "S.U.S." In bands I was in previous to Leatherface we played "Babylon's Burning" and Leatherface used to fuck about with "Something That I Said." Dickie would always sound check with that. Play something on your guitar and it would always be "Something That I Said."

MRR: So this new *Dog Disco* album, how do you view it since its release?

Frankie: I like it, I do. But I think it might be overdone. I have very little to do now with the sound and what a record sounds like. I intentionally just stay away from that, so we go to this guy called Freddie and he records it while I sit upstairs watching videos. Videos of him wearing spandex trousers by the way because he was in The Tigers Of Pantan (laughs). He's got some great fuckin' videos (laughs). It's like Fred, have you still got those spandex, you know? (laughs). I just leave him to get on with it 'cos I totally trust him. To me it sounds a little bit, what I would call, overdone. To me bands should sound like what they do and to me Leatherface records always sounded like there was a band in the room, type of thing, where as I think *Dog Disco* sounds a bit overdone. But who am I to say? One of the best things I ever done was get away from being involved in the whole process from the first second we walked into the studio to the last second we walked out. I pretty much mixed *Mush*. The engineer recorded it and I mixed it and every record was like that. I mean with *The Last* I was in there positioning microphones and everything. It's not healthy, I just want to go in and be the band and play guitar. Fred would mix a song then come up to me and say, "You wanna come down and have a listen to this?" and I'd say something like, "That guitar that you've got miles away in the distance, that's actually meant to be the main guitar and that one you've got up front there is meant to be away in the distance." Then we'd go back upstairs, continue watching a video then go back down and the guitar parts would be changed, you know? I like it like that. That's like a normal band; going into the studio, having fuck all to say about the sound, than getting it home and saying, "That sounds fuckin' shit!" (laughs). Most bands who get their demos home think they sound shit, so that's what I want to do (laughs). They should think themselves lucky, these fuckin' bands, 'cos they could end up like me where you haven't got a fuckin' hair on your body because you've ripped all of them out 'cos you know what it should sound like and you go for it, you know? But now I'm really happy; I've almost a full head of hair, my pubes have grown back and my armpit hair is quite long, so I'm happy(laughs). All that matters to me is the song and you

could record something on a ghetto blaster or on your four-Track and if it's an alright song, it will still sound alright, it doesn't matter how it's recorded.

MRR: Right, so how does it work with Leatherface writing songs. Most of your stuff you can imagine just being played on an acoustic guitar and vocals and when you've done those solo gigs in the past it worked really well.

Frankie: That is it a lot of the time, aye. *Dog Disco* has a fair bit of collaboration, but usually the songs marked as Stubbs is just me and an acoustic guitar. I walk in the room and go, I've got a tune. They throw their bits on, but with quite a lot of this album on the songs where other people are credited, it's been them walking into the room and going, I've got this tune, which is what a band is. Each member of the band brings in whatever they've got and we all stick our bit on it, you know?

MRR: Your lyrics have generally come across as being open to interpretation as to what you're talking about.

Frankie: (laughs) That's what I love. It wasn't until *Minx* time when I started doing that properly. But it can end up really odd and we ended up with some real right-wing bastards in Czechoslovakia going, "Oh, you're like Skrewdriver?" (laughs). I'm like, "Fuck off!" (laughs). You do "In The Ghetto" and your lyrics can mean this or that. So then I started writing them so that you couldn't possibly mistake them for anything other than what I intended. There's only the *Minx* thing where I think they can be totally taken as anything, no matter what point of view you come from. You can take whatever you want from them. From *Minx* on I was in a conscious state of "You cannot mistake what I am talking about."

MRR: Would you say most of them are autobiographical?

Frankie: Of course. You just sit in your room and whatever comes at you, out of your television or whatever. walking around the street. All you can do is write what you see. It's like folk music to me and there's some great folk lyrics, you know? Because they actually just write about what they see and if you look back in history and listen to whatever music was kicking around at that time, you can get a good idea of what was going on then. Especially if you take like the classic Punk Rock Poll Tax Song. There was a bit of shitkicking about then (laughs). I remember some guy collared me when I was having a piss in a toilet and goes, "Why don't you write a fuckin' anti-Poll Tax song?" (laughs) Because I fuckin' can't, you know? What would I want to do that for? It's not like I'm fuckin' for it, you know? (laughs) It's just the way the world is and I can't affect the government. My idea of a good song is not shouting, "Fuck the Poll tax, Fuck the Poll tax!" (laughs). I can only write about what comes out, you know?

MRR: That was The Exploited wasn't it? Don't Pay The Poll Tax? (laughs)

Frankie: (laughs) I dunno. That makes me laugh. Wattie saying, Don't Pay The Poll Tax when he was in the fuckin' S.A.S. or something wasn't he?

MRR: Yeah, I think he was in the army alright (laughs). What were the sort of problems that you incurred the first time round with Leatherface? I'd imagine there must have been a lot of stuff that needed ironing out before you could realistically get back together?

Frankie: A lot of the problems were pretty much down to the fact of me doing this with you. I ended up doing a lot of interviews, started getting a lot of attention and certain members of the band couldn't fuckin' deal with that. They thought I was self-seeking and a self-publicist and I'm really not like that. I'd say, Well you do the fuckin' interviews then, alight. So they'd do them, but of course they couldn't answer any of the fuckin' questions. Of course if someone is asking a lot of fuckin' questions about lyrics. I'm in a band where you know more about what I've written than the people in the band. They haven't got a fuckin' clue what I'm talking about, 'cos they've never fuckin' read the lyrics. They're not fuckin' interested in what I'm fuckin' talking about. So, I'm doing interviews where people are picking up points in lyrics and have to try and explain them. So when the other members of the band done the interviews, someone would walk in to do the interview and ask them, "So

what's Stubbs on about when he says this?" and they'd be like, "I didn't know he said that. You better talk to Stubbs" (laughs). They were basically being asked questions that they couldn't answer. They didn't know the fuckin' words, you know? When people in the audience know more about what I'm going on about than the people in the band, I thought there was something wrong there, you know?

MRR: So, do you do all the interviews now then?

Frankie: Well I used to put the bass player on because he's funny, you know? He talks shit (laughs). I'd like him to be here now but he's sort of acting as bouncer for a bit. So, yeah, I do them all and I am starting to enjoy them again because for years I wouldn't fuckin' do one, you know?

MRR: Yeah, you're a completely different person to what I was expecting. I dunno, I thought you were going to be just more grumpy!

Frankie: I am grumpy (laughs). I love being grumpy, man. What's the point in being happy all the time? There's far more humor in moaning (laughs). My grandfather was the funniest bloke I ever fuckin' met and all he ever did was moan. But it was so fuckin' funny, you know? Just that cynical. it made me laugh. There's nothing you can do, son, you know? It's just far funnier to look at that dark side of life and you have to laugh. The Irish are very good at that grumpy humor. As long as it's not just moaning for moaning's sake and there's a punch line (laughs). It's just being dry, you know? Having that dry sense of humor which I aspire to be like.

MRR: Cheers then Frankie. that's about it.

Frankie: Alright man. I've pissed me self here, I have. I've been waiting that long for a piss, 'cos you've went on and on and on like an Irish cunt. I'll have to run out to the van and see if I have another pair of trousers.

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STONEHENGE
ANARCHO-EMO-PUNK

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Interview by Julien Besse.

MRR: You've been doing Stonehenge for almost ten years, what keeps you inspired to continue putting out records? In a sea of bands, labels and records, can we not be jaded? I tend to think that the punk scene is becoming over-productive, lacking substance; that there is more emphasis put on production and commerce rather than ideas, communication and cooperation.

Christoff: Well, as cheesy as it might sound, I guess I still believe that punk is a coherent community, where a lot of positive changes can happen. I also still believe that such places are important, because they are visible spaces to prove to people that it is possible to take control over our lives, to build up something of our own and to affirm our desire to emancipate ourselves from the capitalist/sexist/imperialist model. The capitalist model is molding us into submissive people with no perspective/imagination/education regarding the potentiality of "something else," and this is to ensure its very existence and supremacy. It comes to the point where we just can't imagine that there are other possibilities for happiness, social organization, relationships, creativity or exchanges; and we are buying their ideology silently. I still believe punk is a place where people can learn how to refuse this fatality and this education, a place where people can question their behaviors and put them into perspective, and most importantly, a place where they can experiment with things and deconstruct their education in a safe, supportive surrounding. Of course, I have to admit that the way you describe the punk scene of today is also a reality. Maybe we are putting way too much emphasis on *music*. It's interesting to see how much music is the main vector through which we get active; that music is where we put all our energy. It is probably why our community has now reached new standards in terms of business and professionalism. Our scene is a musical scene, that's true, but we also claim we are "more than music." There is a bit of a schizophrenic factor involved here, as our community still believes that it is that "more than music" thing, while not really willing to sit down and discuss a real collective project other than *music*, whether that is bands, labels or gigs. This leads to a very weird and complicated situation, where people have a rather romanticized perspective of what they are truly accomplishing. This collective phantasm of a non-conformist, politically challenging community is also a way to refuse to have an objective look upon things, regarding the status-quo punk is stuck in and how much it affects our ability to live our dreams.

MRR: Seeing how a part of hardcore punk has become a micro-capitalist system as well as highly professionalized, where some practice their entrepreneurship skills before moving on to bigger things, what's our alternative? How can we create a viable network that doesn't fall in the same patterns? Do we need to prove anything to those who are cynical towards DIY?

Christoff: Well, I think that there is room for something else. Of course, I'm not that naïve. I know that this capitalist idea dictates how everything has to be connected to money, profit, success and competition to be valid; that imposes how everything cannot be done "well," other than in a professional way. This model is deeply engraved in our collective consciousness, and that, as much as we are trying to deconstruct our submission, we are still stuck in this lack of perspective, that has been spoon fed to us. The way we organize in DIY punk, the way we create things, all of this still has a taste of amateurism to it. Most of the time, *we* are not even convinced that the way we are doing things is *valid* and what we are creating has as much value as anything "professional." It is really amazing to witness all the energy we spend trying to align ourselves to their standards. The achievement of capitalism is that it is stuck in our very consciences. If we attempt to do things in another way, it isn't valuable, and therefore, if we want to be taken seriously, we have to play their game. It is so important to challenge this, because such an idea also implies a lot of peripheral convictions that are obstacles to our freedom (hierarchy, power, authority, but also constant denial of ourselves and of our potentials). It is important to try and deconstruct this. I believe the value of the DIY ethic does not lie in the establishment of a new micro-society, but rather in the fact that it is a solid base to try and question our collective idea of life, love, creativity, exchange and success. In this sense, I think that we can be a real "alternative." All that we need to do is stop focusing just on music, music, music, and sit down from time to time in friendly, joyful, humble assemblies to formalize our collective project, and stop feeling ashamed if we do. Do we have a collective project as a community other than playing music, putting out records and booking gigs? If yes, what is it *really*? Are we going to be satisfied with this status quo, where we dare not speak out and confront our ideas? Where we would rather stay silent thinking, "we are all here for the same reasons?" Are we so afraid to realize that maybe we live in a phantasmagorical universe of political "awareness" and brotherhood/sisterhood? I have the feeling that today, punk is stuck in this "more than music" mirage because people think it is too "politically correct" or "elitist" to formalize a real project together, other than music. Speaking, listening, discussing, and making our points, this is by no means "elitist" or "arrogant" in my book. We are no better than anyone, and maybe sometimes we are annoying, say totally stupid things or are plain boring in the process, but are we going to be satisfied with that "happy-happy, everyone is content and silent in capitalist wonderland" instead? I believe silence is more arrogant and elitist than fucked up attempts to speak out anyway. Our silence is just the way we consent to everything, and frankly consenting by fear and refusal to give up our privileges, *this* is fucking elitist. There are people for whom all those wars, suffering, violence and injustice we are singing about and wrapping our records with is a fucking reality, and denying them this simple truth is really horrible. Speaking sure implies that we are going to be wrong from time to time. As a community concerned with equality, denial of authority, hierarchy and discrimination, I'm sure that we can find equalitarian ways to share and speak, no? Are we going to be silent just in fear that someone will pretend we are too "politically correct?" What we need to prove actually, is that the process of voicing our opinions and taking a humble, but active responsibility in what is going on in this world is by no means elitist or arrogant, it is just being alive and caring. This is the system that is willing to portray anyone daring to speak out as boring and pretentious. This is the system that is defining what is okay to debate and what is not; and worst, how we are going to debate. Being responsible and caring doesn't necessarily mean we are sad, boring, arrogant, jaded people. We shouldn't feel ashamed to communicate and speak out; really, this is what we should try to prove.

MRR: You've never put an ad out or made flyers for the label and distro. Is there an ideological motivation behind that? Do you think you've "suffered" from the lack of publicity? What's your opinion on advertisement in punk?

Christoff: Well, I basically think that advertisement is bullshit. It is polluting our everyday lives, scattering everywhere and invading every area of our existences. It tries to picture itself as a nice, friendly, discreet little thing. I believe that it is one of the most powerful ways to keep us in line as passive, complacent consumers/citizens. I'm still stunned to see punk labels and bands that are so eager to use such an intrusive, inefficient, unethical, ugly way to spread their information. I believe it's a total lack of imagination to do this, just because in the "real business world" everyone does. As a community concerned with "alternative" ways, we should be happy to try and look for other ways to communicate and share. Advertisement is not inoffensive, it is basically a totalitarian way to force people to stay in line and conform to a model and accept the rules. Advertisement is a way to have people never forget a specific image, behavior, or belief that they *have* to embrace and *have* to conform to. Advertisement is nothing other than a vehicle for standardizing people's desires, dreams and creativity. Advertisement is trying to make us believe our lives *before* the existence of that product or this record was incomplete. It is basically creating desires for us. We have to endure about three thousand advertisements per day, with their backward conservative messages (sexism, competition, cult of the appearance, ethnocentrism, violence, homophobia). We also have to cope with the fact that we have not a word to say about this. Here in France, there is a big anti-advertisement movement these days. A lot of people, mostly in Paris, but also in

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other cities, are organizing against more advertisements in our lives. Many people had to face a trial, simply because it is fucking illegal to refuse the invasion of this ideology (big companies are trying now to introduce advertisements in school, so they can have another space to model people as obedient consumers). We have to realize that this is a fucking *ideology*. They are covering our walls, our neighbourhoods; they are creeping in every possible area of our lives and still we have not a word to say about it, and should shut up, in fear to being fucking criminalized. We as punks accept this shit and simply reproduce it? I cannot understand why there is not even a little voice here to question all this. Using advertising is a way to accept that everything is for sale and that such an ideology is harmless. As long as we will not clearly refuse it, then nothing will change, right?

MRR: Stonehenge is probably one the few labels/distros that still never refuse to trade. Why are less and less people doing trades? Is it something that only "small" labels need to do, while the "bigger" labels don't need to rely on it? What's your take on exclusive distribution and its impact on the DIY network/economics?

Christoff: I think people stopped trading partly because they were losing money with trades and also because it is easier and more convenient not to trade, picking up one of those exclusive distributors instead. All in all, I believe that we don't quite realize how much our community is affected by this. The reality right now, is that some bands and labels will sell a thousand records in ten days, without having to care about trades, packages, or even simply sending a nice little letter, just because this scene is all hierarchized. If it were just a matter of "quality," it would be uncomfortable, but maybe understandable. But the truth is that it's not all about "quality." No matter how good or interesting a band is, if it is not "cool" to buy their stuff, then they will never get any recognition and nobody will buy the records. For me, there is a real connection between the transformation of "punk business" and the lack of curiosity, creativity and solidarity in the punk scene today. If someone is spending some of their time and energy to help spread my records, I just don't understand why I would refuse to do the same for their records. To me, it is just a simple base for nice, friendly, ethical "relationships" based in solidarity. It is, once again, about trying to deconstruct a certain amount of habits and "truths" that we have come to picture as "natural," while they are just actually expressions of the capitalist ideology/organization and nothing "natural" at all. We are fighting against such behaviors in our "real life." We are struggling against imperialism, competition, spreading of one culture at the cost of others every day, why do we accept this when it comes to the way we organize in the punk community and how we produce/buy/sell/distribute our records? People are putting forward a lot of pseudo-economical arguments, that this record is not as "good" as this one, that there are way too many records produced and that it is bad for the scene. Well yes, if we are "reasonable" then all this might be true. But is punk about doing nice reasonable "business," or is it about something else? I know people are going to tell me "Hey, what fucking reality are you living in? We have bills to pay, you know?" Of course this is a reality, and making a living out of punk is not worst than working for McDonalds, I agree. *But* if the only perspective that punk is offering is this one, if everything is about being "reasonable," then maybe we should reconsider the validity of it. Of course, we have to make "reasonable" decisions in our lives to survive, but I think we also have to create spaces where other perspectives are available. If punk is about being as reasonable as a bridge club, then what sense does that make? We are a generation of people who have been exposed to punk at a time where labels, bands and zines were outspoken. I remember not quite understanding the notion of "non-profit" when I first got introduced to it. Punk was about challenging things and was not concerned with being "reasonable." It is about offering alternative ways to live our lives, and not resigning ourselves to endure *their* idea of life. It was sometimes "naïve" and sometimes not realistic, but it touched us, it made us change our lives. This is this kind of punk that gave us strength to reconsider our reality and dare to take a stand. This was fucking empowering. Now, we are getting old and we are refusing to carry the banner? What picture of punk are we passing on then? A picture of reasonable resigned rockers? You know, the irony of all of this is that what made me a punk was my disgust for this world of "reasonable rockers." We can hide behind pseudo-economical arguments, but the reality is that such a world is strengthening all that we are against: privilege, competition, non-communication, silence and hierarchy. My rage against such a world is what brought me to punk, not my desire to start a nice reasonable rock and roll record company.

MRR: For a long time you've been associated with the French "emo" scene. Now that these bands are long gone and you're putting out different stuff that appeals to more people maybe, do you feel that you're less ghettoized, less obscure, and that you're maybe getting more recognition?

Christoff: I don't know. I never felt that ghettoized to be honest. When that "emo" thing started out here, I think we were totally connected with the punk scene, because it was just an extension of punk, with no life by itself, outside of punk. I don't see much difference between labels like Flat Earth, Profane Existence, Nabate and myself. The music was different, but the way we were doing things was exactly the same. Some people were not acknowledging this, of course, and I understand that the music was not their thing. It is no big deal for me. Music is important, but it is also just a facet of what I'm interested in "accomplishing" with the label. I think in the early 90s, an interesting thing was the fact that Health Hazard and Bob Tilton could share the same bill in a squat, and that it was not "weird." I think as long as punk has a project bigger than music and you are part of this project, the kind of music you play is just a matter of taste and that's it. I can see that when punk had a more coherent collective project, the "scene" wasn't as separated into millions of little musical cliques as it is right now. And that to me is really clear evidence that if it is only about music, then we are not a community, but just a bunch of "musical scenes." But I think I see what you mean. Some people always have had problems with "emo," considering that it was not punk. I know there was an "anti-emo" thing going too. I think it is kind of stupid, because if punk is "more than music," just like we claim, then rejecting someone because the music they play isn't "punk" in our book, well that just seems like the weirdest thing to me. Who can define what punk should sound like anyway? Today, it is Discharge; ten years ago, it was something else. We can always rearrange things and history according to our own taste. That's no big deal. If punk was just one sound, one place, then we would probably all be completely bored right now, no?

MRR: There are a lot of these French "emo" records that admittedly didn't sell very well, how did the label sustain itself then? What records sold enough to balance things financially? You haven't been working for the last seven years or so, was money ever an issue where you considered ending the label?

Christoff: Some French emo records sold pretty well to be honest. The Finger Print stuff basically kept the label in tracks for years. There was a time where every new record I was putting out was just a total disaster. Without the Finger Print records; I would have had to quit doing the label. The label has been financially self-sufficient for quite a long time now, so no, I never really considered stopping the label because of that.

MRR: A lot of things have changed in the punk scene within the last ten years. I remember getting into DIY punk and buying zines, writing letters and mail ordering seven-inch records of bands I didn't know. You were one of my first "contacts/pen pals," and I guess you loved that aspect of punk as much as I did. But where did it go? I'm aware that things need to evolve, but where does punk find its identity and substance in the era of the Internet, downloadable music, websites and glossy magazines? In that aspect, how is running the distro now different than five to eight years ago?

Christoff: Yes, things are changing, mostly because this big machine in which we live is imposing its changes to us everyday. We basically have no control there, and are maybe too weak to fight back. But I think we have the power to make something out of this community. Maybe it is just going to be "personal" changes, like having an opportunity to question a bunch of values that we wouldn't have

had a chance to otherwise. Maybe it is just by giving us a new perspective on what we can accomplish in our lives, on how we have the power to take control over our existences. I think punk has an identity of its own. It is nothing perfect, and nothing that is going to touch everyone, but it has an obvious power to move certain people and bring interesting questions to their lives. When I got involved with punk, it was the first time in my entire life that I dealt with people taking me seriously. I was not a brilliant musician, I was not an educated orator, and still, my words, my experience seemed to be valid in their eyes. At least, people in punk were all willing to offer a space where I could express myself. Punk has a way to make some ugly, shy, self-hating kids, a little bit more confident about what they are about, and the ability to channel their anger in a positive, empowering way. Things sure are changing. I think people did not really think of the consequences of little compromises they made at certain points. In retrospect, I think it made spaces for bigger things to get in our community. I think the biggest difference I'm witnessing right now, is that every label and distro that seems to start today has the ambition of "making a reasonable living" out of it. That's a big change in perspective, because ten years ago, people where not even thinking of such things. I'm not willing to discuss the validity of making a living out of punk, because that's a whole debate in itself. I'm just concerned with the fact that this perspective seems to be a common starting point for people to get active in punk today, while it was absolutely not the case a bunch of years ago. What this means is that somewhere along the way, we switched from a "generous," altruistic community, where there was an obvious collective project, where involvement was about sharing, experiencing and meeting people, and not about personal benefit; to a self-centered community where things are only done to satisfy ourselves, or to achieve individual objectives. In our desire to create self-sufficient spaces for ourselves, we somehow lost the will to set our actions as part of a real collective *project*. What project is punk revolving around today, other that sustaining our lives and saving us from factory jobs (and rocking hard just like in the good old days)? I don't see a lot of people who are getting active just for the sake of helping build up/keeping alive something that has meaning to them. People used to start a little distro because they wanted to give their friends and local punks a chance to grab records easily and cheap. People used to start labels to put out their friends' records. That was an act of "generosity." Now, people are starting businesses. They are punk businesses, and I don't necessarily question those people's ethics. I just would like to point out that this is a clear illustration of a deep change in how we position ourselves within our community. I think we maybe need to rethink a little bit of all of this, because when everything in punk is about "business," it will not be important whether those businesses are *punk* or not, because the capitalist "consumer/professional" relationship will have been restored in punk in its fullest level, and it will just suppress any other perspective. And this is what is happening here today.

MRR: Some people seem to think that it's "such a great time to be a punk," do you agree? Does punk fulfill its agenda of raising awareness of issues such as sexism/homophobia, and creating a safe environment; or does it fail miserably and still remain mostly a record-collecting boys club?

Christoff: Well, I tend to believe one of the shittiest thing with punk, is that we, the safe white men, are speaking a lot of political statements that we do not invest too much energy to make a reality. We are so convinced those statements are our reality that we are not really careful about the consequences of our promises for some less "privileged" people if we fuck things up. When we claim our community is a safe place regarding sexism, for example, we have the responsibility to take our words seriously, because some women are going to get involved here, trusting us, and the consequences for them is not just disillusionment if things turn bad. I think we really need to think about this, about how we talk in slogans here, not even aware of the shitty consequences for less privileged people. Thinking we are non-sexist, non-homophobic, non-racist, non-classist people isn't enough. We need to be responsible people, and not claim we are "free" of things that we actually didn't spend much time thinking about or reading about. We need to hear the voices of women, queer people, non-white, non-wealthy people. We need to read their books, look at their movies, and learn from their fears and history. We need to take them seriously and welcome them in our community with honesty and responsibility, not as selfish white imperialists who believe they know everything. I've seen way too many women being badly hurt within the punk scene. Women who got involved because they trusted our promises, and who were expecting to deal with educated, responsible males. It made me rethink my own attitude a lot. I was one to be totally convinced that I was not sexist, and to openly claim it, while most of my "education" on the subject was a bunch of punk records and zines. I think this sums up a tendency that we have as western middle-class white males, that we believe we know what we're talking about by "enchantment," and that this mirage of awareness makes us "safe" people. I'm not really surprised that there are fewer women involved in punk, or that personal issues are brought up less and collectively discussed. I think the scene today is more concerned with records, with music, with fucking traditions, with its own image, and that this big rock and roll steamroller is levelling everything down. I understand that the punk community reacted toward that "politically correct" thing at some point, and maybe needed some fresh air. But once again, I think we can both have a lot of fun *and* take some issues seriously, no? Being serious about certain issues doesn't mean we are arrogant or elitist people; it is just an expression of our involvement and concern. We cannot keep screaming and putting forward that we are a non-sexist, non-homophobic, non-racist group of people, and not think about it and work on it seriously! We cannot raise slogans as if it was a game.

MRR: How has the French punk community evolved since you first got into it? What's your opinion of its current state? You have lived in a bunch of different cities over the years, some of which where pretty dead in terms of having a scene or shows. I'm always curious of how active punks can live in places where there's nothing going on and no scene/community to get involved in. I always felt the need to be "where the action is," sort of. How has your involvement in the scene been affected by the places you lived in? How do you feel now, living in Bordeaux where the scene is pretty active at the moment?

Christoff: Well, I mostly always had to be where my friends were to be honest. This is not just a matter of a "scene," but also a matter of feeling alive. I think France never had any amazing active local scenes, at least not like those in North America, or in Denmark these days, or in Germany. We have some bigger spots, Saint Etienne, Dijon, Paris and Bordeaux, but here the DIY punk scene always remained very tiny for some reasons. I have lots of boring theories about that, that we can discuss someday in your little flat, listening to some of your crazy records. I don't know, I'm really disillusioned about the French "scene" these days. Most of the active people are the same that were around ten years ago; it looks like very few young people are interested. I don't know, I feel weird about this.

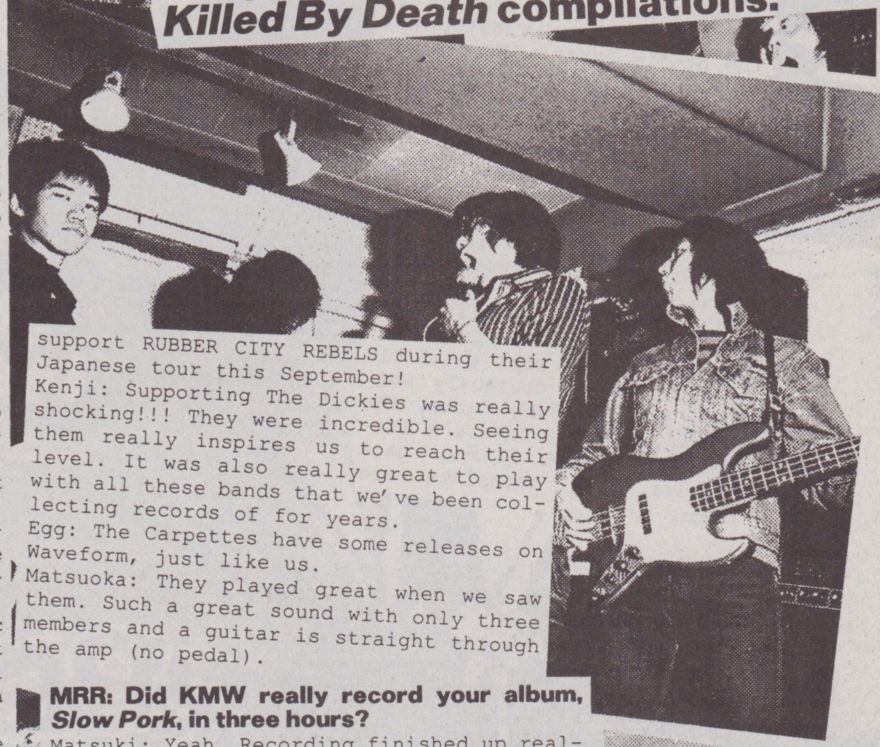
MRR: In these dark days of war, repressive political climate and such, what does it mean to do a punk record label? Do you sometimes feel the uselessness of it, in the grand scheme of things? I guess my final question is: How do we make punk relevant with the current state of things?

Christoff: This winter was my first time really questioning the future life of the label. From time to time I feel less empowered by things, just like all of us, I have my ups and downs. But last winter was different, I turned 34. I know people tend to think, "We are the age that we are in our head." But really, the body is also changing with time. I have less and less energy to channel and redirect my passion and positivity. The mail order has become a monster and I really feel like I have way too many responsibilities with fucking bills to pay, orders to send on time. Most of all, I feel less connected with punk the way it is today. But after long weeks of questioning, I finally decided I wanted to go on with the label, not as a jaded, resigned person, but with a whole new reborn determination and passion. I am going to focus more on things that I feel are relevant for me, I guess. But I still believe punk is the right place for me. How do I make it relevant for me? I don't know, I guess this is probably hard to answer, as it is probably deeply linked with my own life and history, and how punk came into my life and what it brought to me. Even if I can see some "shitty" aspect of it, I also have the honesty to say that this isn't any worst than in "real life," or that at least it is really not specific to punk if we are inconsistent people. I don't want to focus too specifically on our own shits, and make as if we were the worst people. I really think punk has a potential that shouldn't be ruined. It is easy to be jaded and negative, but I always try to take a step back and get a more global perspective. Hell, we can complain for hours about some fucked up relationships or behaviors here, but what about the "real world?" I mean, as much as I think it is important to allow self-criticism in our lives and to aim for "more," I also think it is important to balance this with the reality of our lives and educations, and the reality of this system. Making changes and cracks in our education and being able to deconstruct ourselves is a long process, full of loneliness and fear. I have this weird and probably paradoxical position, where I believe we need to bring issues forward and collectively discuss them and not hide them; and I also believe we need to realize personal issues are scary and incredibly hard to deal with. It is easy to point out the inconsistencies in others, but with time, I also realized that I was far from being a strong and perfect person myself. A lot of times, "activism" is also a game of conflict, power and "better-than-you" shits. We need to rethink this as well, and try not to deal with everything on that fucked up conflict level, and realize that even this is a part of our education. Well, I probably don't answer your question here, sorry. I have a handful of friends here who are inspiring me everyday, and well, that might be stupid, but shit, I still feel at home here. I believe we can make some difference, even if we are stuck in so much complicated shit. I don't know. It is a bad last answer I'm afraid. I would love to just end this by saying that people should feel free to get in touch with me for anything, really. I'll be happy to talk with you, as I might have said a bunch of stupid shit here. Love. Peace. Solidarity. Anarchy.

Stonehenge, B.P. 46, 33031 Bordeaux Cedex, France
www.stonehengerecords.com

KEEN MONKEY WORK

Keen Monkey Work is a Japanese punk band that plays the sounds of today as influenced by the classic 70s punk bands and the notorious *Killed By Death* compilations.



MRR: Please tell us a short history of the band.
Matsuoka: The four of us met in the same class at the same boring high school ten years ago, which is when we formed.
Egg: We wanted to play "PUNK ROCK" purely those days.
Kenji: At that time, we were influenced by TEENGENERATE and REGISTRATORS.
Matuski: Forming the band was a gradual process. We took our time.
MRR: Although your music seems highly influenced by 70s punk and garage, there are far more various elements to your sound than some would think. What other bands were big influences on KMW?
Egg: Bands like THE DEAD BOYS, BUZZCOCKS, STRANGLERS, and GERMS are the bands that all four of us like and are influenced by. The rest is TELEVISION!
Matsuoka: PATTI SMITH, TALKING HEADS, BLONDIE and all of the old NY 70s punk. RICHARD HELL is the reason I began to listen punk music. I was highly influenced from such a bands.
Kenji: Aside from the strictly punk stuff, bands like THE WHO, DOORS, KINKS, YARDBIRDS, and VELVET UNDERGROUND influence me. I also like some of the pop from the 90s, like SUPERGRASS.
Matsuki: It's hard to pick specific bands. Although I like 70's punk, I want to KMW to establish ourselves as a full ROCK band. We don't want to be just a copycat 70s punk band.
Kenji: Although our influences are mostly 70s punk, we don't want to simply imitate those bands. We throw those influences in to extend our own sound.
MRR: I think that the sound of KMW does have more variety than strictly copying 70s punk rock. Especially songs like "Empty Of Harm", a new song due to be recorded on V.A
Matsuki: Yes, that's a song with far less of a 70s punk influence.
Kenji: I think our stuff like that might not be what people expect out of us right now, but little by little it's coming around.
MRR: Have you played with any great bands recently?
Matsuki: We have been playing shows with FIRESTARTER, THE REGISTRATORS, ZYMOTICS and THE YOUNG ONES. We get to play with these bands quite a bit. They are our favorite bands!!
MRR: Has KMW been able to support any overseas bands?
Matuski: We had supported Dave Phillips (AUTOMATICS, UK), THE DICKIES, CARPETTES, and DEADLY WEAPONS. We get to support RUBBER CITY REBELS during their Japanese tour this September!
Kenji: Supporting The Dickies was really shocking!!! They were incredible. Seeing them really inspires us to reach their level. It was also really great to play with all these bands that we've been collecting records of for years.
Egg: The Carpettes have some releases on Waveform, just like us.
Matsuoka: They played great when we saw them. Such a great sound with only three members and a guitar is straight through the amp (no pedal).
MRR: Did KMW really record your album, *Slow Pork*, in three hours?
Matsuki: Yeah. Recording finished up really quickly. It works well since we can usually record our songs in one take.
Kenji: Mr. Otsuki (*Slow Pork* producer, also singer/guitarist for THE REGISTRATORS) wanted the record to sound very raw and energetic, which is why we moved so quickly. I think it came out good. It captures what we sound like live very well.

MRR: The snare drum has a sound like tam. Is that cool??
Matsuki: I like it. It sounds raw. When I listen to our songs and our records, I want listeners to realize that it's all us, raw and unrefined. I think that's what makes a good album.
MRR: What do you think of about possibly releasing records on an overseas label?
Kenji: I'd be very glad if our music was distributed overseas.
Matsuki: I want to know what the people of Germany, England and The United States to be able to hear Keen Monkey Work. I'd want to know what they think of it.
MRR: Do you have any interest in touring overseas?
Kenji: We are very interested in touring overseas. If we could, that's all we would do. I don't think our sound just for the Japanese. You can get through the language barrier and still enjoy the music. I want people from all over the world to hear our music.

http://keenmonkeywork.hp.infoseek.co.jp

THE HATEPINKS

Jesus, the Hatepinks are hot! They're from Marseille, France, and all I know about this town is it's suffering from a very high crime rate and a it's got a pretty good soccer squad--but I guess those things are related somehow. Last year someone sent me a split 7" on Lollipop Records, and the first song named *Bored on Pills* blew me away; just seconds after put the needle on this fine piece of vinyl, I found myself jumping around and singing! (It was the Hatepinks--Distraction split). Some weeks later I received their debut album *Sehr gut Rock n Roll*, also out on Lollipop, and these 13 cuts made me smile again. This record has got everything, fast-paced '77 punk smashers, pop-drenched tunes like the title song, and perfect covers. Let's see what these old Frenchies--who obviously worship the New Bomb Turks, the Pagans, and the Briefs a lot--have to say. Stand back America, the Hatepinks are comin' in.

Interview by the Gimp / Choke Media Empire (www.catbull.com/choke), Choke *Fanzine (Austria)*
Pictures by Emmy Etié / Elmar *Choke* zine / François Guéry / Mounin

MRR: The first very unusual question is who plays what in the Hatepinks?
Olivier: Ok, Huggie Von Rosenberg plays the guitar, Colonel Nasser Le Pink plays the bass, Olivier Gasoil sings, and Rémi der Pinkbeat does the drums. We are Le Hatepink baby—we hate the world, yeah baby.
MRR: As old as you guys look like, I suppose you've all played in some bands before. Are there any worth mentioning?
Olivier: Yes. Colonel Nass played the bass in The Plastic Congelators, a very short-lived band. It was years ago, they only had a 7" out. Rémi and Huggie were playing together in some power pop band named Dollybird, a mini-album was out on Elp records, and I was playing in The Gasolheads. The band is one year old. And we are not as old as we look, asshole.
MRR: Olivier, why did you stop with the Gasolheads?
Olivier: It was planned from the start not to do a long-living band. After the first album we decided to only do two others and then to stop. We made several LPs, 7"s, 10"s, and two or three European tours. It was enough. We never had the desire to go into some shitty evolution.
MRR: What does the term "Hatepinks" mean? I can translate it, but when I take a look at your web site and record covers, I come to the conclusion that you actually love the color pink.
Olivier: We though it was obvious that it's just a stupid gimmick. But if you want an interpretation: The Hatepinks is just a name we dropped on a list of stupid names. We should have kept it in French: "*Les Haines Roses*," but it's too late now. We don't really hate pink. We just hate people with a pink-tinted vision of life, people with a positive attitude about the shit they get for a living. Like: "I got a car, I got a wife/husband, I got a house, I got food, so let's be happy!" Fuck them. On stage we dress in pink and our equipment is painted in pink but that's just because people and ourselves love this kind of silly things.
MRR: What was the runner-up name?
Olivier: Another stupid name: The Jacket Chromes.
MRR: I guess most of the readers didn't hear a single note of The Hatepinks until now, so please explain the style of punk rock you're playing, and name three bands people might think you sound a bit like.
Olivier: Maximum minimalist garage-punk. Three bands? Ok: Plastic Congelators, Les Olivensteins, and The Black Leather Fuckers. Ok with that?
MRR: How long do you want to go on with the Hatepinks? Any plans, any goals you are heading for? Do you wanna go on tour in the US? Tell us.
Olivier: We think we'll do only two or three LPs, so maybe two more years and it will be over. No, we have no plan, just have fun, putting out decent records on cool labels, and playing in places we have never been before. *Oui mon ami!* Going over there in America and doing a tour is something we got in mind. The TV Killers, the Splash Four, and the No Talents did it. We would love to.
MRR: Which bands have played a predominant role as musical and/or visual influence for you?
Olivier: All those silly bands with a funny look: The Weirdos, Crime, Starshooter, The Dickies, The Ramones, The Damned, Johnny Rotten, Métal Urbain, you know all those bands that combine the visual impact with the catchy tunes. Yeah, we have no pride, yeah, we have no style of our own, yeah, we got nothing, and all we got is shit. We are not the symptoms; we are not the reasons. We are gimmicks. We are gimmicks.

MRR: Who are the most important bands in France right now? I know there are some people who form a lot of bands [*la "famille heureuse parisienne" de garage-punk*] but what's cooking in the rest of France?
Olivier: I don't know if they are important, but here are few names: Neurotic Swingers, Cowboys from Outerspace, both out of Marseille, our hometown, I think they are the best, along with the Jerry Spider Gang from Toulouse, Hawai Samourai, Weak, The Fatals, The Zoomen, Sparkling Bombs, Petit Vodo, Anteenagers MC, Little Green Fairy, The Jakes from Bordeaux are great too, The Magnetix, Volt, Elektrocution. Maybe you will hear from one of these bands someday. They all have records out and are active in one way or another.
MRR: Does your live appearance differ a lot from your studio recordings?
Olivier: No, I think not, just the usual little differences. No voice dubbing, no rhythmic guitar during our short guitar solos. *Merde!* Who gives a fuck about that technical shit? Your question is dull. Go to the next one, you little piece of shit.
MRR: Olivier, why don't you play an instrument on stage, is it because you don't know how to play, or is it just necessary for the live show?
Olivier: I can't play a single chord. I don't know how to play. I'm not a musician, and I hope I never become one of those fuckers. Those stupid little suckers who thinks a break, a solo, or a musical progression is important.
MRR: I guess you cannot make a living from the band, so what are you doing to get the rent paid?
Olivier: Huggie Von Rosenberg works as a sound engineer in a big studio for contemporary music, Rémi Pinkbeat is jobless, he buys and speculates with musical equipment he finds on the internet. Colonel Nasser is a student, doctor in Arab History. He gets money from the ministry of education. I work as a librarian in a public library.
MRR: Why did you choose *Sehr gut Rock und Roll* as title for the record? I mean, it's German!
Olivier: Because it's funny. Don't you think it's funny? Didn't you laugh when you saw it? The next album will be called *Kartofel Swing*, on Lollipop Records.
MRR: Do people make fun of you because of your strong accent when speaking English? Or is it helpful when you speak to German girls?
Olivier: We don't have a strong accent when we speak English! Our accent is very good! *Haha, oui très bon!* Yes, foreign girls love our *charmant* little French accent, but that's only a stratagem to get them to eat camembert and drink red wine! You wanna have some French tricks? "*Je me drogue pour rendre mes amis intéressants*." It means "I do drugs to make my friends interesting." *"Mes couilles sur ton front"* means "I'm happy to meet you." Ha ha ha, what a nice exotic language, isn't it?
MRR: Have you ever danced naked?
Olivier: I have never danced in my whole life. Huggie danced naked with red wrap sunglasses and striped tie after the last show we did in Besançon, a small town in the middle of France. This story is true. And then he climbed on the bar so the promoter could spank him.

MRR: Have you ever had an imaginary friend?
Olivier: All my friends are imaginary, I guess.
MRR: Have you ever puked onto someone?
Olivier: Do you call myself someone? If you do, then yes, I already puked onto someone. And Nasser puked on the guy from the band we played with in Wiesbaden, in Germany. He smoked too much strong grass and drank too much Jägermeister. He fell from rank of colonel to corporal that night.
MRR: Have you ever had more interesting interviews than this?
Olivier: No never. It is a whole revolution for us to do this interview—it changed our lives. Hey, I just want to add we got a record coming out next month on Unity Squad records, a 7-track 12" on clear vinyl, but don't buy it, as it's an American label! No money for American industries! Stripe it or steal it and put it in the trash! You dirty American folk! You pigs! Are you really all fat and ignorant?
MRR: Have you ever been mean to each other in the band?
Olivier: No we are always kind and nice to each other, except with Rémi. He is just a drummer, you know.
So that's all! Fuck you my friend! Stay punk rock, you piece of shit!
http://hatepinks.free.fr

GET IT AWAY

Get It Away are a hardcore band from Chicago. They rarely practice and only about half of the shows they've played have been played with all of the actual members of the band present. They combine the energy and dynamism of what is expected from the best of fast hardcore bands, with the lackadaisical attitude of a hippie who's been smoking pot for thirty years too long (even though they're straightedge). They recently released a 7" on Third Party Records which documents them on their best performance, and highlights their ability to play fast and raw hardcore. The following interview showcases some of the other sides of the band.

Interview by Rich Booher

Anton (vocals), Bill (guitar), John Caution (drums), Ryan (bass).

Anton: (to John) …and then you freaked out because you thought she said that you didn't know how to make macaroni and cheese.
John: That wasn't about that, it…
Anton: You said, "Fuck that! She's not a real friend."
John: She told Mike that I couldn't do anything for myself!
MRR: All right, speaking of making a big deal out of nothing, we should probably start this interview. Could you guys give a general history of the band?
John: I wasn't involved in the history of the band.
Bill: Yeah, John was the last member. Okay, it started out as an idea by Anton's arch-nemesis Chris Wilson of the late Def Choice.
Anton: Did you guys break up?
Bill: We broke up, kicked out Kyle, and then got back together, but anyway.
Anton: Kyle was the best thing you had!
Bill: So, Chris Wilson…
John: I fucking hate that kid!
Bill: He wanted to start a straight edge band, and I wanted to write songs to please his liking for Up Front and Straight Ahead. So I wrote songs that Chris Wilson would like, keeping in mind that I might be able to play drums for the songs. And so I made them, like, the real youthy fast beat. And then me and Kyle Streit…
John: And then Bill didn't get a haircut for, like, three years.
(all burst into laughter)
Anton: That's it, that's the end of the story.
Bill: All right, fine. You forgot where we are. We're doing an interview.
John: I asked Bill at a Def Choice show…
Bill: No, I asked you.
John: No, at Time to Die's first show, I asked you if I could be in Get It Away, and you were like, "Kyle's playing drums." And I said, "Yeah, but he's not straight edge. Let me replace him" and you said that might be cool.
Bill: I should say that Kyle and I were talking to Jim Grimes about being in the band, first of all.
Ryan: Because he looked like a real edge dude.
Bill: We wanted to be in a band that people liked.
Anton: You obviously never got that accomplished.
Bill: But then we got Anton.
Anton: Whom nobody likes.
Bill: So, Jim kind of slacked off on emails, so we had to go with our second choice, which was Anton.
Anton: I thought I was like the third or fourth choice.
Bill: Well, yeah, but that's the history.
MRR: You guys recently had a 7" come out on Third Party Records…
John: Not by choice, I did not want to be on Third Party.
MRR: Why?
John: I don't support his fucked up ways. He was going to put out a Seven Dust record.
MRR: I don't even know who that is.
Bill: (mimicking Nick Baran of Third Party's voice) A lot of people are asking me about the Seven Dust record, but they were Buffalo guys originally.
Anton: He didn't finish asking the question.
MRR: That's right. So, my real question was if you could talk about how you recorded the 7", which I think is fairly interesting and unique.
Anton: We actually recorded it twice. We went in and recorded it at one of Ryan's friends' house. We didn't really have our act together, which is kind of par for the course, I guess.
John: Par for the course! (laughing) The golf interview!
Anton: Aren't we a golf-influenced straight edge band?
John: Get It Away-teed off in 2004!
Anton: So, anyways, we played really shitty on it, which was basically because Bill didn't feel like coming and he had to watch Conan O'Brien instead.
Bill: Well.

Anton: It was too important for him to watch the Conan O'Brien tenth anniversary special-which I have to say was good-but it wasn't worth missing recording and fucking the whole thing up.
Bill: That's why it fucking sounded bad. I take total responsibility for it.
Anton: So basically, the people who recorded were really nice and helpful, but we just didn't do a very good job at it. We couldn't re-record it there because the kid was busy or something, so we were trying to figure out what to do. There's a radio station here called Underground Communiqué, and they have live bands play on it, so we asked if we could record there. And we went in and recorded it during the course of their show, off-air. So, basically, the entire 7" was recorded live in about two hours.
John: It was Justin no. 2 and the guy with the nu metal beard.
Bill: We had to buy the guy pizza, and I made a comment about why were we buying this guy pizza, and I guess it offended him. But I didn't care because the 7" would have had leads on it, but he didn't have time because he was a dork.
Ryan: He was complaining about a lot of the problems and skipping in the recording, and he was like, "Oh, I gotta redo this because my name's going to be in the record," and John says...
John: I said, "Who says we're going to put your name on it." And then he was like, "I could go home" and he got kind of upset.
MRR: The guy with the nu metal beard?
Anton: Yeah. I think this may come across wrong in the interview. I mean, we actually-well, I appreciate what he did.
John: No, I totally appreciate it. I like that guy. He's really nice.
Bill: The person we offended-we have got to mention the kind of shirt he was wearing.
Ryan: He was wearing a NOFX shirt.
John: Who was?
Ryan: Nu metal-beard.
John: Justin no. 2 was wearing a Seven Dust shirt, if I remember correctly. That guy has got horrible taste in music.
MRR: The band that Nick Third Party put out?
John: Yeah.
(several people attempt to speak at once)
Anton: Okay, this is turning out like our first recording session.
John: No, shut up. Seven Dust is touring this summer with Pointing Finger and Witness. Check them out. I like Seven Dust.
Anton: Did we actually answer the question at all?
MRR: Yeah, I think you got to the interesting part. Well, I guess the next questions are a little more serious, but that probably won't last for long.
John: I invented the internet. And I invented the interview.
MRR: You have a song called "Pretty in Punk"...
John: It's about Molly Ringwald.
Anton: Ooh! You beat me to it. Molly Ringwald moved to France because she didn't like the US. I think that's pretty cool.
John: What a dork. Freedom fries all the way!
MRR: Anyways, to get to my question about the song. It's about mainstream co-optation of punk fashion and style, and my question is, how much do you think that stuff actually affects what's going on in the underground? I have fairly mixed feelings about it. On the one hand, it does seem like it infiltrates and starts to change the way things go for bands and people who are trying to do things according to DIY principles. But, on the other hand, it seems like it becomes something so detached and removed from this community that it doesn't really affect what we're doing very much.

John: I think DIY is really taken away from punk when Nick Baran puts out bands like Seven Dust, and what was that other band? Witness...that nu metal band Witness.
Anton: I think that...
John: Anton can answer this better than anyone. He wrote a song about Molly Ringwald in his first punk band.
Anton: I don't think it's really an issue of if there's something infiltrating the underground, but I think it affects it in other ways, and I think that...well, this isn't coming out right. You pretty much answered the question by asking it.
MRR: I think it's very nuanced, and I don't think...
Anton: Ask the question again.
MRR: How much does what goes on in this mainstream version of punk, or alternative culture, really affect what goes on at the level of the underground or DIY, or whatever we call what we're involved in?
Anton: Hopefully it doesn't at all, but the truth of the matter is that it does affect it a great deal. I think it starts to seep in, like some of the ideas and mentalities start to creep into the underground scene. And I think there's something wrong when you have supposed DIY shows, or bands, that are still calling themselves DIY that are doing things like taking on really mainstream attitudes towards punk in general.
John: I have something to say about this. I think the scenes are kind of divided. Like, I think there's the whole Hatebreed crowd, and that whole scene that mixes in with nu metal, the whole Hatebreed/Seven Dust scene. But, I think there's a pretty good separation right now between the DIY and the mainstream. While it does sucks that there's the mainstream, there's also a separation where we still have DIY hardcore. And I think for the most part there's still a lot going strong about it still, and I don't think it's being affected that much

because the scenes are two separate things.
Ryan: Yeah, there are totally two separate scenes. People who are a part of the Hot Topic scene are the kids who get really mad when the see their t-shirts on Nokia commercials and stuff, so it doesn't really affect us at all. You know what I'm saying?
Anton: I disagree. I think that what's going on there is attributed to us, and even though it's a completely different place...
John: Yeah, but no one's buying it.
Anton: I don't know about that, I mean there are probably thousands of kids that we don't know that are buying it.
John: They're douche bags though.
Anton: Well, regardless of whether you think they're douche bags or not...
John: Those kids are morons. I don't give a shit about them.
(laughter)
John: I'm being serious now. This isn't even a joke anymore.
MRR: You guys have a song about animal rights, and I was thinking about how this issue gets emphasized a lot less than it used to. I was wondering if you have any thoughts on whether that is that case, and if so, what is the reason that it gets emphasized less frequently?
Ryan: I don't know man. Let's just get some barbecue.
John: I wasn't vegetarian when I first joined this band, but they beat me in. Anton threatened me.
Anton: I'd like to say that we turned you out.
John: What?
Anton: Well, I think it's important to re-emphasize issues like that. Because even if it's kind of common, there's still a lot of younger kids coming in getting involved, and they may have not been around in like 1993, when every band was talking about vegetarianism/veganism and it was kind of a big trend. But now, I don't think many people care about things like that. I could see in hardcore it not being important to most people. So even though it's kind of an overdone issue, I think it's still important to have it be visible, if not, the most important thing that we're talking about.
John: As much as people think that music and lyrics don't affect people, it really can. Because, like, I said before, I wasn't vegetarian before. I was introduced to vegetarianism through hardcore.
Bill: Since he read the song "Cats and Dogs" by Gorilla Biscuits.
MRR: Which is certainly a catchy song.
John: And now that I'm vegetarian, I can sing along to "No More" by Youth of Today, if anyone covers it. That was the only reason I became vegetarian.
Anton: I think what John said about words or lyrics affecting people is really true as far as the situation that we dealt with in St. Louis went. I don't know if we really want to go into that now.
John: What do you think captain disco duck?
MRR: Talk about it. I don't know what happened there.
Anton: In St. Louis, we played a show with To No End and Step on It. I have always really liked the St. Louis scene. There are a lot of young kids and they really have a good time...
Bill: Every scene has a lot of young kids to Anton.
Anton: Well, they really support bands and have a lot of fun. They just seem to be really open-minded and carefree. This time, I really noticed a lot of "fag" and "bitch" jokes before we played. I thought that it was really out of place, especially in St. Louis, seeing as I view it as a fairly progressive scene. So I said something when we played, and I didn't think it was out of line or that big of a deal. I basically just said that if I were a woman or a gay person I would feel really uncomfortable because of some of the things that were said. It kind of ignited this whole controversy. Probably over a dozen people have talked to us about it. There are some women down there starting a zine, and it's not because of that, but they said it was a positive influence on them. So, I guess words can definitely have a strong effect on you, whether negative or positive. So if you're saying things like "fag this," "fag that," then you're going to affect people in a negative way. I think that the fact that so many people got in an uproar over a simple statement I made proves that words do have an effect on people. I don't know if anyone else has anything to say about it. Bill was mad because people wouldn't mosh for us after that.
Ryan: Yeah, you couldn't hear it, but if you listened very carefully, you could hear (foghorn sound) after you said that.
John: I think I saw a tumbleweed roll by outside too.
Ryan: Well, people applauded, but it was very restrained...
Anton: People said they were really uncomfortable because of it, and I think that sometimes you need to make people feel uncomfortable. I mean, instead of just being like, "fucking mosh it up, bro!" It's okay to make people feel uncomfortable if what you're doing is telling them that what they're doing is possibly making other people uncomfortable. I would rather have someone who is saying "fag" feel uncomfortable than someone who is gay feel uncomfortable.
John: Until the people that say stuff like that start feeling uncomfortable, I say fuck that. They should wise up, as Bold would say.
Anton: I don't want to bring Bold into this conversation at all. I want to hear what Bill has to say about this.
Bill: First of all, I don't think it "ignited a controversy." But okay, perhaps on a very small scale. But I think those kids who felt uncomfortable; they maybe weren't the ones that were saying anything. Perhaps they felt like they were being accused of something that they didn't do. Other than that, I don't really have any opinions on that.
John: I think that's definitely true for some of those kids.
Anton: I feel that there was a lot of denial going on. There were a lot of people, not many of them got in touch with me directly, saying, "there's not a problem here, everything is fine." But there were other people saying they really felt like there was a problem there and it hasn't been addressed. Some people were saying that I was the only person they had heard ever address it. And I don't think it was a big deal, what I said. I'm not saying I'm a hero or something, but just saying something that simple when nobody is saying anything does make a difference. That's my whole point.
John: Yeah, definitely. The less a message is being spread across; whoever says something about it is going to have more of an effect. It's definitely more important than saying things that have been said a hundred times. But at the same time, until the problem is fixed, you should keep pushing for it.
Anton: I don't regret what I said, and it makes me want to say things even more. If I can affect people, either positively or negatively, at least there's some sort of discourse and people talking about things instead of just going to a show and having it be just like a club or a bar.
John: Yeah, the only thing negative that could have possibly come out of that is just that kids didn't mosh for us.
(laughter)
MRR: Next I wanted to ask what you think are the most positive things going on in punk and hardcore today?
John: I'll go first. I always say I think there are a lot of awesome bands right now that play good music. I don't think that necessarily a lot of them have good things to say. That doesn't mean they have bad things to say, I just don't think that people are saying enough.
Ryan: I don't know, whatever bands spark fun. Whatever bands live by the motto, "Have a good time all the time." That's my life.
Bill: I really like all the different haircuts that are coming out, the fashions, and stuff like that.
(laughter)
Anton: Bill is pioneering a lot of them.
(Note: Bill and Ryan look *a lot* like 70s rockers.)
Ryan: I love the fashion trends that we're setting.
Anton: I really don't like those.
Ryan: I think we're one of the most positive things in hardcore right now.
Anton: I actually like the fact that we show up and people are like "Who the fuck are these guys?" Then we're a straightedge hardcore band and we don't look like a straightedge hardcore band, except for maybe John Caution.
MRR: With his Floorpunch sweat suit.
Ryan: The best thing I heard over tour was that eleven year-old girl in Tennessee. She said in a southern accent, "Y'all were a lot better than I thought you'd be." I had to make her repeat it like six times because I didn't hear what she said. I was like, "What does that mean?" and she said, "Y'all look like...I don't know, y'all are better than I thought you'd be."
John: I thought that girl was cute; I thought she was like sixteen.
Anton: I think one of the most positive things going on in hardcore is the sense of getting things done in the DIY community. For so long, there wasn't really anything going on. It was like you were playing to bigger promoters and they might have been hardcore kids, but they were booking in a rock star promoter sort of sense. Probably in the last, like five to six years, there's been a lot more spaces like Mr. Roboto in Pittsburgh, and there are places like the Babylon in Minneapolis. People are really starting to come together and...
Ryan: The Babylon burned down though. Babylon is burning!
Anton: I think that people are really a lot more willing to work together on projects that support the DIY scene. I think that's a really positive aspect of what's going on today.

FROM THE VAULT

This time around we give two old and two new photos from the *Maximum Rocknroll* photo archive. Clockwise we have the UK's FOUR LETTER WORD taken by Dave Fracture, from the country that used to be called Yugoslavia—TOZI BABE, Spain's ULTIMO RESORTE, and finally the Bay Area's own LOOK BACK & LAUGH taken by Josh Stein.

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BOOKS

Pop Gun War • Farel Dalrymple
136 pages • $13.95
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1095 SE Main St.
Milwaukie, OR 97222
www.darkhorse.com

It's a rare talent that can tell a story and illustrate it and make it seem so easy that its' almost like watching a movie. In his first graphic novel, *Pop Gun War*, Farel Dalrymple tells a story that is like an ancient myth translated into an inner city drama. He even provides a meticulously rendered map of an imaginary city—sort of like a New York City version of Middle Earth, with places like the Children Asylum Island, the Crustophur Power Station, Wild Dogs, and the Mean Child Junkyard. A very urban story about a fallen angel who gives up his wings to be "normal" and a lonely boy who learns to fly.

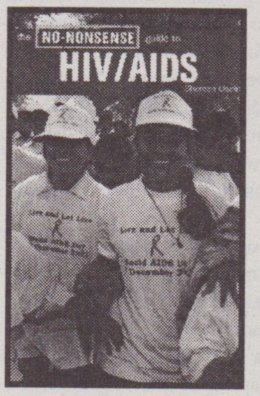
What first catches your eye, of course, is the incredible artwork—bold black lines—an amazing sense of anatomy, perspective, space, and tension. Dalrymple approaches the imagery as a filmmaker might.

The opening sequence is of a projectile plummeting to earth and slamming into a building. A tattooed fallen angel. In wordless, cinemagraphic detail, we watch as the angel brutally discards his wings, apparently rejecting his heavenly aspect in search of normality. A little boy desperately grabs the wings and runs and at home he straps them on, discarding his own normality for higher aspirations. This is Sinclair, a lonely boy who misses his sister Emily, a child prodigy musician who is always performing and touring, and his mother, who is perhaps dead but in any case does not seem to be present. Sinclair's only real friend is a "bum" named Addision who is constantly tortured by the neighborhood kids. Sinclair is always trying to protect him and in fact learns to use his wings as he himself is attempting to escape those bullies. That's how he first learns to fly.

I don't want to give up too much of the story, which unfolds sort of like a dream, poetic and meaningful but also surreal and chaotic—sort of like things are normal but then oops, no they're not. There are all the neighborhood characters you could possibly wish for—the bully with a sparking head, the midget wearing a top-hat, the corrupted, mean-spirited monk who walks with chains clanking beneath his robes, the fish named Percy who wears glasses and swims through the air, and the Emilies—the hot neighborhood band fronted by Sinclair's genius sister. At some point, a fat corporate man shows up, complete with a talking head in a bag, trying to get the Emilies to sign a contract to become the "next pop sensation." There is a duel of sorts between the midget named Sunshine who grows taller and taller as he tells the school children they must use their minds, and the corporate fatman whose talking head tells the children not to think but to throw trash on the ground and smoke cigarettes. Who do you think the kids want to follow? Then there is the element of random senseless violence thrown into the mix. And of course there is the doll factory and an evil genius puppet-master.

There is a feeling of dreaming throughout the story that is a bit Ozian, and the sequence where the midget Sunshine becomes a giant striding through the city is very reminiscent of *Little Nemo in Slumberland* by the legendary Windsor McKay. Dalrymple applies a painter's sense to his comics—each of the chapters opens with a painted spread. Using a brush almost exclusively to ink the pages, the line flows easily, revealing a keen awareness of anatomy and expression. His use of panels is also very sophisticated—sometimes closing in, sometimes non-existent—and it works so well with the flow of the story that you don't even notice. The only downside of the book is that it's not longer—I read it way too fast. But it's also fun to read twice—you see a lot more little things you might have missed the first time. Dalrymple is like a young urban punk rock Windsor Mckay, and *Pop Gun War* is the total package—a great story and exceptional art.

—Fly



The No-Nonsense Guide to HIV/AIDS
Shereen Usdin
139 pages • $10
Verso Press
180 Varick St., New York, NY 10014-4606
www.versobooks.com

Growing up in the Bay Area during the 80s, my psyche was deeply affected by the outbreak of the AIDS epidemic. I turned thirteen in '82, entering both puberty and ten years of hardcore drug and alcohol use at a time when contracting HIV was considered a death sentence. At the same time I was becoming aware of political issues such as US involvement in Central America, I was also becoming aware that a disease could have political implications as well. Posters showing Reagan's face pockmarked by KS lesions sprang up in protest of his administration's lack of funding for AIDS research. Through older friends with close ties to the gay and lesbian communities in San Francisco, I saw how those communities were forever altered as gay men died and lesbian women took on increasing caregiver roles. And, of course, there was a mainstream culture that tried to pretend that the disease would only ravage certain stigmatized or fringe subcultures. As one joke from that time put it, "Avoid the H's—don't be having sex with any Haitian, hemophiliac, homosexual heroin-addicts."

While I knew that AIDS had global implications, I never understood the depth of that impact until I picked up Shereen Usdin's *No-Nonsense Guide to HIV/AIDS*, the latest in the No-Nonsense Guide series from Verso Press. Usdin is a South African writer, and, coming from a country that is physically located in the Third World but psychologically rooted in the First, he is uniquely qualified to describe the global effects of the pandemic. In this succinct text, Usdin describes how AIDS is decimating individual lives and entire economies in Third World countries, examines the disease's greater impact on women and children, provides easily understandable information on the inner workings of a complex, rapidly-mutating virus, and discusses how inequities between the First and Third Worlds are feeding the spread of AIDS. The book is a quick and easy read, and yet it is filled with statistics that highlight the disease's dramatic effects and sprinkled with the stories of individuals living with HIV or struggling to make a personal impact on what Usdin refers to as "the greatest humanitarian crisis the world has ever known."

Usdin begins by looking at the scope of the AIDS pandemic and its

effects, and what he sees is horrific. He describes a disease that is both incurable and capable of rapidly mutating, a disease whose genetic composition changes rapidly enough to thwart the drugs designed to combat it. It is a disease which first spread through marginalized and stigmatized groups of people, allowing it to gain a strong foothold while the majority of people were content to turn a blind eye to its effects. And, it is a disease that lives in a world full of poverty, war, and global migration—three factors allowing it to spread quickly around the globe.

While much of this may not be new information to most of us, what may be surprising is the number of people being affected. According to numbers Usdin cites, as many as 42 million people worldwide may now be infected with HIV. Of these, as many as three million may be children under the age of fifteen. In Sub-Saharan Africa, as much as 9 percent of the population may be HIV positive, and in many Third World countries, AIDS is undoing gains made in lowering the infant mortality rate and lowering life expectancy in general by years.

The idea that almost 30 million individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa may be HIV positive is in itself staggering. However, as Usdin points out, the effects go far beyond those actually infected, or even their friends and families. What Usdin describes is a cycle of poverty and disease wherein the poorest countries are hardest hit by the pandemic itself, have fewer resources to fight off its spread, and then feel greater economic effects as well. To be more specific, poorer countries do not have the resources to fight the spread of HIV or to adequately care for those with AIDS, the cost of treatment for those effected outstripping the Gross National Product of some countries. Then, unable to afford the drugs that may prolong life with HIV, more people die. Because most of those infected are of working age, the economies of these countries are overwhelmed by additional costs ranging from absenteeism at work and the costs of replacing workers to the costs of supporting orphaned children.

Usdin then turns his attention to how gender roles aid the spread of HIV, and what he describes is equally terrifying. While women in the US undergo a degree of sexism that increases their likelihood of contracting the disease, their experience pales in comparison to that of women in the Third World. For example, rape is becoming a widespread form of transmission in Africa. South Africa is the rape capitol of the world, with a woman being raped, on average, once every 17 seconds, and wars and conflicts within the continent carry rape with them in their wake. Third World Catholic and Muslim cultural views towards gender relations and sex also help HIV spread. While the Catholic Church's views regarding condoms are well known, practices such as genital mutilation in women, widespread in many Islamic countries such as Egypt, are not. Even economic forces play a role in the increased effects on women. In many countries in Africa and Central and South America, for example, men may leave home to seek work for months at a time in other regions of the country, acquiring HIV from prostitutes or other sexual relationships while away and bringing the disease home to their wives when they return.

With similar acumen, Usdin examines the virus itself from a scientific standpoint and discusses the global response to the pandemic. He explains the different types of drugs used to combat HIV and why these drugs work well in combination with each other. He also discusses the nuts and bolts of transmission and early treatment in great detail and describes such frequently ignored issues as mother-to-child transmission. He looks at the role of multinational pharmaceutical companies and explains how international law and the WTO are preventing Third World countries from having access to generic drugs to combat HIV and AIDS. Amazingly, despite the depth of these issues, Usdin manages to close on a hopeful note, telling the stories of widespread response to the pandemic in communities across the globe.

As one of over a dozen titles in Verso Press's No-Nonsense Guide series, Usdin's *No-Nonsense Guide to HIV/AIDS* continues the tradition well. Including works such as the *No-Nonsense Guide to Terrorism* and the *No-Nonsense Guide to World Trade*, books from the series are making their way out of the world of small press, gaining greater notice in the mainstream, and even being used as texts in college courses. The books are unique in their ability to present complex issues in a clear, stripped-down form. They are introductions to a topic but provide enough information to gain an understanding of the major forces at work regarding each issue without getting bogged down in endless dates, numbers, or names. Authors are almost always from outside the US and frequently from outside the First World, giving the books a global perspective that shows how we are affected here and how others are affected worldwide. They are, in short, damn near close to being perfect. Usdin's *No-Nonsense Guide to HIV/AIDS* is no exception.

-Doug Grime

Got To Land Somewhere • Anne Ullrich & Lee Hollis
112 pages • 11,90 Euro + postage
Ventil Verlag & Trust Magazine
Augustinerstr. 18
D-55116 Mainz • Germany
www.ventil-verlag.de

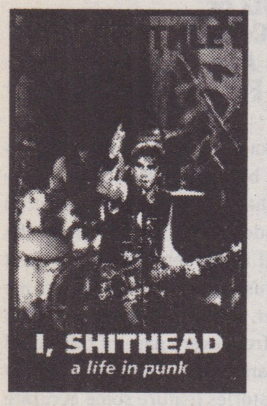
This second edition of *Got To Land Somewhere* in paperback is just shy of a coffee table book of hardcore and punk photos, but a far step up from a photo zine. There are some great photos here. Anne Ullrich has captured the intensity of the hardcore show, bodies flailing about propel into extreme emotion. Lee Hollis' commentary is sometimes amusing, but not quite as inspiring. Hearing about why he wasn't at a show or that he's not a fan of some band is not such momentous insight to these hardcore photos. Most of Anne's images stand on their own and the ones that don't are not more meaningful because of Lee's narration. Exceptions might be the Cheetah Chrome Motherfuckers intense description of the show brings that photo to life and quoting Henry Rollins, "I want to fuck," is always good for a laugh.

From the first photo it is apparent Anne has the ability to accurately capture the action of a punk show with a leather-patched-ass, stage diving punk seconds before crowd impact. The best photos here archive a moment in punk, usually mid-air. A Bad Brains' photo with HR doing some kind of back flip is unreal. Other outstanding jumps are by the singers of Heresy and SNFU. While the photo of the Beatnigs' singer has a surreal element due to car rims he is thrashing about. One of the two Bad photos has the entire band off the ground with boot bottoms showing, classic. The other quintessential punk rock necessity for memorable photos is a facial expression denoting torture and pain, So Much Hate and Hostage of Ayatollah stand out here. The Subterranean Kids photo even being a little soft focus is quality due to the singer's insane facial expression with molar fillings showing. The possibly less action packed Challenger Crew photo has a different kind of intensity with the singer holding a punk's arm fist clinched. I would have preferred Anne's comments since she was the one looking through the lens if any comments had to be made. This is especially true for a sweet picture of a very young Ray of Today in fuzzy bear slippers. Anne, what was going on here? Her comments might have been entertaining here, whereas Lee's diatribe of why straightedge boys aren't into sex was a bit perplexing.

There were a few photos that could have been left out and it would have made this a better over all document. The Capitol Punishment guitarist looking like he is reading music on the floor didn't really grab my attention. I know Raw Power has some years on them but they still have the moves, I think they were jumping last time they were in the Bay Area, none of the action is here. The Vandals out of focus photo is not arty enough to be worth keeping and help Faith No More with this fashion assault, Simpsons T-shirt and "aztec" corner shorts, ouch. Some of the "Hair Photos" are pretty brutal, in a bad way, on the eyes. As always seeing Kevin Seconds with long hair is tragic and along haired Government Issue could make one sick. The Hard Ons, Gore and Jingo De Lunch prove that not all hair is offensive, just most.

Oliver Schmitt layout vision detracts from some of the photos. Maybe

Anne and Lee dictated what they wanted and he catered to their graphic whims, but he should have said, "fuck that" on a few things. Any time they use a photo twice as a background or as a close up, it simply fails as a graph technique here. Some of the more average photos are used twice. An average Victim's Family photo is just flipped and used again is truly unnecessary. Besides that over all there are enough visually enjoyable moments that this is worth checking out.
-Tobia Jean



I, Shithead—A Life In Punk • Joey Keithley
256 pages • $17.95
Arsenal Pulp Press
103, 1014 Himer St.
Vancouver, British Columbia V6b 2W9

"You're a pioneer, Jim. Pioneers get all the arrows."—*a friend talking to Iggy Pop*

Being a true believer isn't always easy, but it can be rewarding. Being a trailblazing true believer in the days when punk rock was just being born must have been totally demanding. DOA didn't let adversity stand in their way by a damn sight.

The story of Joey Keithley reads like a nice long PG-rated conversation. At the very start, we are told that stories of drug addiction and alcoholism will not be featured, so those looking for a tabloid-esque sleaze-fest should probably avoid this. However, if you're into DOA or just in the mood for a breezy life story/extended tour journal, this is right up your alley.

I, Shithead starts out with a quick look back at Keithley's childhood and formative years. Television coverage of the Vietnam conflict has the effect of radicalizing him early in life. We then learn that he initially wanted to be a lawyer but is drawn to rocknroll before he finishes a single term. Soon, he and some friends move to a commune and are quickly hated by nearly everyone in the small town. A band is formed, but local audiences do not appreciate early gigs.

Soon, Keithley and friends are back in a suburb of Vancouver and in a band called The Skulls. The most amusing Skulls story has to be an account of a three-day gig at a Hells Angels gathering. Soon, the band is splits-ville and DOA is born.

Early DOA gigs are not appreciated one bit. In time, they open for the Ramones, who are clearly an inspiration for what will become DOA's amazing work ethic. They make a record, which eventually leads to a show in San Francisco where Jello Biafra becomes a major booster

From here, the book becomes an endless account of DIY touring. The impression I get is that there is no distance DOA won't travel to play a show. I can almost smell the stench of body odor and feel the fatigue as I travel with the band to the east coast and eventually Europe. They are possibly the first band to cross the Iron Curtain.

Amusing tour stories abound, without a hint of embellishment. While it is clear that Keithley's politics lean left, he is not preachy at all and, beyond viewing coverage of 'Nam as a kid and seeing the effect of clear cutting forests, experiences which inform his world-view are not explored here.

Over the years, DOA has gained some pretty unlikely fans. The fact that Rollins and Biafra are fans should come as no surprise. However, I had no idea that David Lee Roth actually requested DOA as an opener when Skid Row couldn't make it to Vancouver for an arena show. Even more odd is learning that Pete Seeger likes their set at a benefit and that he remembers it years later.

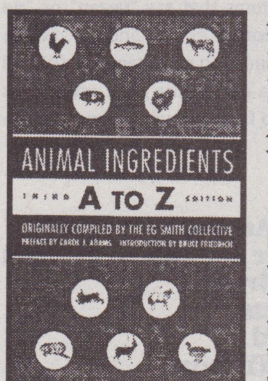
With very very few exceptions, DOA's experiences with other bands aren't given much ink. In most cases, all we get is a mention of who was on what bill and where and how well the show went, in as few words as possible.

We do learn that DOA doesn't get along well with The Clash. The way Keithley tells it, the band (Mick Jones in particular) behaved like prima donna rock stars.

The author really digs the Dead Kennedys (no surprise there) and goes out of his way to heap praises on Iggy Pop, who headlined a few DOA shows before he became sober and wealthy.

For fans of DOA, this is indispensable. For those curious about early Canadian punk rock, it is a must-read. While I, Shithead is extremely readable and crammed with information, I am saddened that, to my knowledge, there is no other material documenting the activities of lesser-known figures from Canada punk lore.

The best part of *I, Shithead* is that it is neither a self-congratulatory piece of self-promotion nor some nostalgia trip. On finishing it, I don't wish I were there. Rather, I am grateful that some guys a decade or so older than me expended the effort to pave the way for those who came after.
—Ed Hunter



Animal Ingredients A to Z Third Edition • Compiled by The EG Smith Collective
99 pages • $9.95
AK Press
www.akpress.org

The pursuit to limit all animal by-products in one's life is on going. When I first became vegetarian all I knew was that eating animals was disgusting. I was 10 years old and didn't think about the horrors or abuses that lead to the pristinely packaged cartons of eggs and milk complete with deceptive pictures of animals roaming freely on small, manicured farms. Slowly more information entered my awareness that made the truth undeniable. Gelatin was one of the first big animal by-product disappointments. How could delicious treats like marshmallows and gummy bears have boiled animal ligaments, hoofs and cartilage? Oh well, we learn these things, stop eating or using items containing these substances and go on to find treats that aren't part of a violent process of slavery, torture and sickness.

In the preface of *Animal Ingredients A to Z*, Carol J. Adams discloses that only 50% of an animal's body is processed as meat. That leaves the other 50% to become products that aren't so easy to distinguish, but still support, reward, uphold and ratify the slaughterhouse system. Only by rooting these products out of our diets, kitchens and bathrooms do we truly make a stand against this exploitive industry. It is difficult to stop using film or buying vinyl records, but each of us makes our dirty exceptions. Because this is a process that takes education and implementation, Bruce Friedich encourages individuals to not be judgmental and difficult about their choices with their community, social and in general. By not making veganism a daunting chore others are more likely to be open to trying to weed out the rennet, steryl alcohol, olestra and the like after weaning off the more obvious animal products.

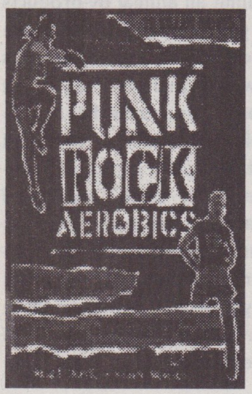
The EG Smith Collective has compiled a detailed resource in their third edition to aid any vegan in his or her pursuit to not support any part of the meat industry. Though there are lists of what not to eat or use there is a balance of positive vegan friendly items present to help fill the void that some other information might have created. They also dispose of some vegan myths. Now I can't complain about licking envelopes and stamps as processes that denounces my belief system. I can only say that licking synthetic glue is unpleasant to me. Chapter 2 is dedicated to vegan nutrition. This chapter concisely outlines simple ways to create a healthy balanced diet while discarding the animal excess. I wish I had a guide like this when I first went vegan at 16 years old and only ingesting dark chocolate and coffee, amazingly, didn't work out so well. Nothing quite induces relapse cheese eating like delirium. At first, sometime you fail.

For the drinking vegans chapter 5 might be the wet blanket you

weren't looking for. The vegan beer list is pretty extensive and it sounds as if the use of gelatin in US beers, corporate and microbrew, is out of fashion, but outside of US beers you might want to check for fish bladders, "isinglass," and other animal products. Wine on the other hand does not fair so well for the vegans. Many wines use gelatin, isinglass, egg albumen, chitin or ox blood. Maybe this fact was outside my radar as a non-drinker, but I've see quite a few vegans swilling down wine as a "healthy" alternative. For the good news, there are a few wines marketed as vegan, as I found out when I was trying to get some vegan treats a liquor/coffee shop.

As with any reference book, it would be difficult to memorize the 12 pages of defined animal ingredients let alone the next 14 pages that list more names of animal by-product ingredients plus the 12 pages of possibly animal derived ingredients. Luckily, this guide with all these items to avoid is compact enough to take to the market or on a trip. And the A to Z part means that the information is easy to access. If you've been vegan for sometime or can understand root words about half of this is obvious, but the other half are all things that I always wonder about, like diglycerides and caprylic. Sure, it is easier to only buy items that say "vegan" or "no animal by-products" but sometimes that is not an option and it's nice to have something handy to refer to. Though education can seem painful and alienating having the commitment to not be a part of the meat industry is enough to spark inventive ways to replace old favorites with items that are truly cruelty free.

-Tobia Jean



Punk Rock Aerobics
Maura Jasper and Hilken Mancini
208 pages • $17.95
Da Capo Press
c/o 10 E. 53rd St.
New York, NY 10022
www.dacapopress.com

Punk Rock Aerobics, a seeming over-extension of the mass proliferation of punk into every nook and cranny of our lives, is not the brainchild of some Nike suit and tie nodding his head to Blink 182, or a post-Hot Topic spandex ploy. In fact, its beginnings were as humble and homegrown as punk was itself, its founders Maura Jasper and Hilken Mancini and progenitors as true to their genre as the Band-Aids were in the movie *Almost Famous*. That is, they love the music first and foremost, true punkers and record collectors as they are, and the Aerobics concept is their expression of that.

I took part in PRA's first venture outside of their native Boston, when they did a one-off Aerobics class at CBGB's a coupla years ago. Mike Watt ex of the Minutemen was billed as the DJ, but he just leaned against the wall and smoked the whole time. The music rocked with the expected (Ramones, Stooges) and the unexpected (Television Personalities), we lifted bricks instead of weights, and hell, the whole thing really worked! It was not just a joke although we all laughed, but there was a real workout to be had and the music provided a perfect backdrop to the choreographed moves.

So, a book. A book? Why not a video, for chrissakes? Remember the *Preppie Handbook* from 1980? This book will join that book as an icon of American subculture. It's a perfect blend of humor, passion, and real honest to goodness information.

Jasper and Mancini are Boston punks. Aerobic moves like "La Reste" (a spoof on early Boston punkers La Peste), "Roadrunner" (the Modern Lovers tune), Unnatural Axe and Mono Leg ("presumably named for Boston fixture Jeff Connelly aka Monoman) are specific nods to their hometown, while they stretch punk to post-punk to the satisfaction of those musically well read by suggesting cardio routines to the likes of Swell Maps and the Pop Group. With a chance to speak their piece in this book, they recommend their favorite punk books, movies and records. Their tastemaking shows that they are totally old-school in the know and are not just any girly punk poseurs.

Da Capo Press first began doing reprints of jazz books, later getting into rock, then rock journalism, and now doing first runs of books, of which this is one. They're also to be commended for giving these punks an outlet for their fine work.

—Henry Yu

Peanutbutter and Jeremy's Best Book Ever
James Kochalka
278 pages • $14.95
Alternative Comics
503 NW 37th Ave.
Gainesville, FL 32609-2204

James Kochalka is no elf! He's an evil vampire! I know this because he flew through my window one night and sunk dirty ugly fangs into my left index finger. From there he drained me of all my sweetness! He fed on it all to maintain his public image and left me humiliated, bitter, and just plain mean. You could say my lost sweetness is staring at me from every page of this book!

This may be just the sort of thing you want to buy a child or to enjoy as a childish treat. The charming short comic stories feature some accurate and humorous depictions of cat behavior and the behavior of selfish bullies (silly selfish bullies). The anger and violence implied in the first few stories melts away as my high-jacked sweetness overwhelms it in the rest of the stories.

Kochalka has developed a following in comics and music with his sweet and innocent underground boy act over the last 5-10 years. His art here is cartoonishly simple, yet consistently expressive and informative. As he ages now, he is well positioned to move into the children's' book market. His original fans are popping out li'l ones!

Peanutbutter is a young girl cat whose owner has an in-home office (I think). Peanutbutter wears a hat and tie in male human 40s office worker fashion and either does office work or plays at doing so. While she is slavishly devoted to pleasing her owner, her efforts are often disrupted by her urge to nap and to tear up papers. Some story plots spin out from this theme, in traditional TV sitcom style.

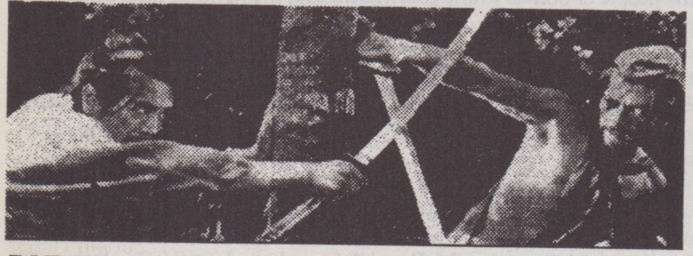
In a tree outside the office lives a boy crow, Jeremy. Jeremy is a greedy, rude, little shit (or would be if he wasn't written by the sugarboy elf) who enjoys screwing with twits and collecting hats. Peanutbutter suffers Jeremy's brutality for a few stories. This is mostly just mean talk and bullying behavior, not the ultra violence that usually occurs in comic/cartoon animal animosity [parenting alert: in the early stories Jeremy has a pistol and an itchy trigger finger]. After those first stories, sure enough, Peanutbutter's sweetness begins to smooth Jeremy's ruffles and she grows able to parry his thrusts and they build a friendship. Gee, can't we all learn a wonderful, adorable lesson here?

This book may be great for 7 year olds (or vegans of any age). It will probably make you smile more than a few times as you breeze through it. The first story had me hoping the book would be about a world were pet cats really are office assistants and squirrels bury rubies in the ground. But the setting quickly becomes just background for the old "sweetie and spiky meet, fight, become friends". And for cuteness, this offers nothing that Curious George or Little Madeline doesn't already provide.

-Seth Hollander

MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



EAT ME

Everybody, including director Morgan Spurlock, knows that McDonalds' food isn't very good for you. But what if, he posits, someone were to eat at McDonald's three meals a day for a month? **Super Size Me** is a opinionated, and often hilarious documentary of his daily torture.

There were a few ground rules. He can't eat any food except what they serve at McDonald's, and has to eat three meals a day. He must, by the time his experiment has ended, have sampled everything on the McDonald's menu. And (in the cruelest part of his dare) he must accept a super-sized option whenever it's offered.

If two-thirds of Americans are overweight, you wouldn't have been able to tell from the fit, young crowd in my audience. In short, the film preaches to the converted; but **Super Size Me** does such an efficient job that it acts almost like an anti-serum against obesity.

Or at least, against McDonald's food. In the slightly washed-out video transfer, the stuff looks like landfill. Brown, gelid, and leaky, you feel queasy watching Spurlock cram the food into his face. A quartet of doctors, equally revolted, follows Norman as he eats his way through mounds of Big Macs and super-sized fries. He begins at 185 pounds, in good health. Nearly all his doctors warn against his project.

The remainder of the film is a series of interviews interwoven with his road trip across half of America. McDonald's are everywhere, of course, so there's never a problem finding somewhere to eat.

Spurlock finds one man who eats McDonalds burgers, at his count, well over 700 times a year; he credits his trim physique to skipping the fries. At the other side of the spectrum, we meet a bed-ridden, morbidly obese man who can scarcely move without burdening his heart. We see, set to music, a laproscopic video of his stomach-stapling operation. That sequence enough to put you off food, period.

As Morgan looks grayer every day, his film delivers its knockout punch. As school children are seduced daily with McD-style options for public school lunches, there's been a sudden jump in adolescent obesity and diabetes, illnesses that simply didn't exist with young people decades ago. Many make it through classes on dessert and a Coke.

Not unpredictably, the effects of this diet includes addiction. As Spurlock's McDonald's diet goes into its final weeks, he becomes as listless as a junkie, and the only time he returns to normal is when he gets his fix of high-fat, high-sugar food—a high that's followed by aching depression. A disturbing episode with a possible heart attack nearly hospitalizes him—a Mac Attack gone deadly. His girlfriend confides that, during sex, Morgan now always has to be on the bottom; anything else exhausts him.

Against all the predictions, one doctor informs him that his blood levels show the start of liver damage. When his blood's drawn, a greasy layer of fat quickly appears in the test tube.

Super Size Me is lightened by amusing animations and Morgan's gently sarcastic asides. The documentary is perhaps a bit too obvious at times—a populist piece marbled with *Fear Factor* gross-outs. But it's also painfully credible. and gutsy enough to take on some powerful corporate foes.

The public relations arm of McDonald's refused an interview.

No such problem with the main character of this next doc. He's a psychopath, has multiple personalities, amd no conscience. He definitely has no soul. In **The Corporation** (directed by Jennifer Abbot and Mark Achbar of the Noam Chomsky film **Manufacturing Consent**), the filmmakers reason that this psychopath may be the corporation. The corporation is a "person" by legal standards, and capable of great savagery in the pursuit of profit.

This film uses the same template as **Consent**, and its design is equally inventive. It starts off in the bright corridors of Any Office; then a PowerPoint presentation goes "online" to access a gallery of images and short movies describing the history of the modern corporation. The presentation is interspersed with interviews from a selection of historians, pundits, and business leaders.

If East Timor was the focus in **Consent**, Bolivia emerges as the main case study here. When the American corporation contracted with the Bolivian government for water rights, poor people in this less-than-prosperous Latin American country discovered it was now illegal even to gather rainwater. A quarter of a worker's paycheck could go to the water company, and the government quashed demonstrations. While the struggle for cheaper water was ultimately successful, it came at considerable human cost.

Many corporate sins are more subtle. We meet a spiky-haired corporate spy who poses as a headhunter, attracting gullible employees to reveal company secrets in the guise of a job interview. But there's surprise waiting for the hopeful applicant—they've sabotaged their own business, and stand to lose their employment. The faux headhunter rationalizes his conduct: "They should know better."

The Lucy Hughes is a VP for the Initiative Corporation, which coopted research into "the nag factor"—studying how children push parents into buying decisions for toys. Not unpredictably, the study was subverted to make it easier to get children to influence or control their parents' buying decisions. Hughes says she regards the whole matter as a kind of game, grinning to the camera.

Given their power, calling corporations to task can be risky. When Fox news reporters Steve Wilson and Jane Akre produced a blistering report on the dangers of cow hormones in dairy products, the story was forced through eight months of rewrites. Finally, Fox News offered a payoff if the journalists would sign a confidentiality agreement to squelch the story forever. The journalists quickly filed a lawsuit and eventually lost their case—but the story did reach our ears. It eventually does in most cases, but only after the damage is done and the profits collected.

Despite its serious undertones, the filmmakers render **The Corporation** with a light touch, making this long documentary pass all too quickly. It's not to be missed.

Canadian feature director Guy Maddin has left a string of quirky films behind him, most occupying a cinematic realm somewhere between David Lynch and Mel Brooks. **The Saddest Music in the World** trumps his past work with a demented near-classic.

As the Depression grips America, frustrated Broadway producer Chester Kent (Mark McKinney) and his oversexed girlfriend Narcissa (Maria de Medeiros) return to his native Winnipeg.

Any sensible response to their sort of misfortune should involve deep depression and large amounts of alcohol. As it happens, Her Serenity, the Queen of Beer, Lady Port-Huntly (Roberta Rosselini)—the double-amputee owner of a local beer company—is sponsoring a lucrative contest that could make their blues disappear. A $25,000 cash prize goes to the person with the saddest music on Earth, and all comers are welcome. It's hard to imagine anywhere sadder than Winnipeg in the dead of winter, so inspiration abounds.

It proves to be a small world, after all. Chester's father Fyodor, a disgraced doctor, was the very doctor who'd sawn off both of Port-Huntly's legs in a drunken operation. Unbeknownst to Chester, his main squeeze Narcissa is actually the estranged wife of his eccentric brother, Roderick. The brother always hides his face behind a black veil, and has a mason jar with his dead son's heart, preserved in his tears.

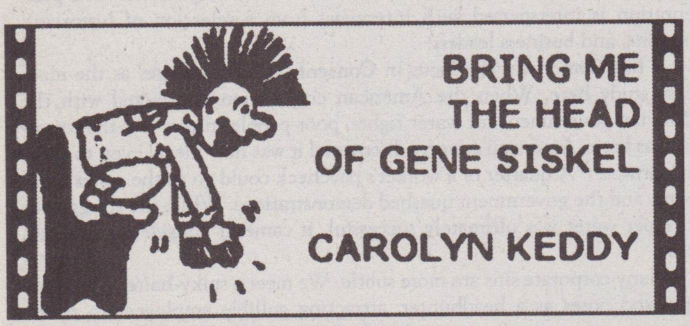
The contest opens promisingly. Siam offers a piercingly sad solo flute evoking both misery and ear pain, while Mexico performs a touching paean to infant child burial. This and the remaining contests receive a suitably tasteless voice-over narration by a pair of grinning hosts.

In the match between Canada and Africa, a grim rendition of "Red Maples Leaves" is pitted against native funerary drums, where a bereaved cannibal tribe weep as they cut themselves with sharp objects. But the highlight is when Roderick (who now calls himself "Gavrilo the Great, Europe's Greatest Cellist") tries to compete against an orchestra of panpipes, Inuits, and Mongolians in a version of "San Francisco Here we Come," a tribute to the 1906 earthquake.

Guy Maddin's visual style owes a great deal to early silent films; the visuals are mostly in grainy black and white, showing an almost painterly sense of composition. At heart, Maddin is a parodist, and the more you know about movies and musicals, the more you'll enjoy his creation. It's like **Moulin Rouge** gone mad.

And who said depression couldn't be fun?

Comments? Email me at anywhichway@myway.com.



SUPER SIZE THE CORPORATION

This month presents two filmatic examples to prove that going to the voting both in November will have nothing to do with changing the authority in this country. Yes, I will go and vote. I always do. It is just that I have given up on it meaning anything more than a symbolic gesture of democracy. The real way to vote for change is with your money and what you spend it on.

The Corporation is the first and more depressing of the films. This examines the development of the corporate entity in the United States and its eventual attempts expand throughout the world. If you don't already have a huge sense of guilt when purchasing a corporate product by the end of this film you will.

The Corporation starts by giving a bit of history of the corporate rise in the US. Corporations were originally appointed by the government to build bridges, roads and other things to help people. A corporation was established for this goal and when the job was completed the corporation was disbanded. Then came the industrial revolution and corporations were started in the form we see them now. Some lawyers managed to use the 14th Amendment to the Constitution to declare a corporation as a person. **The Corporation** then takes this notion of a company as a person to investigate what type of person it is. After following various steps of a psychiatric test, the corporation is declared to be a psychopath.

Perhaps the most disturbing example of American greed in the film is the commodities trader who admits that when the World Trade Towers were destroyed, the first thing he thought about was what was going to happen to the gold market. He happily reports that the price went up and his clients made a lot of money off of the destruction. I appreciate his honesty, but that doesn't make it any easier to accept that attitude.

Another upsetting aspect is a television station's successful attempt to falsify a news report to protect an advertiser. Investigators Jane Akre and Steve Wilson researched a story on rBGH a grow hormone injected into cows to make them produce more milk. After threats from the company targeted in the report Monsanto, Fox television ordered the story to be edited and eventually fired Akre and Wilson. Akre and Wilson sued Fox for wrongful termination. Akre and Wilson won the case, but after three appeals the court overturned the decision citing the most pernicious technicality that there is no law that requires the news to be truthful.

These are only two examples of the insightful and depressing aspects of the corporate driven society we are part of presented in **The Corporation**. There also exists the creepy town that Disney built in Florida which people can move to so they have a nice small town to live in. There are advertisers who use psychiatrists to figure out new ways to force children to want their products. The never-ending exploitation of the inexpensive work force in third world countries as well as the resulting layoffs in the US. The patenting of genes so that companies can own new forms of life. CEOs of companies being part of governmental decision processes. The list goes on.

The Corporation tries to end on a high note by following the story of the people of Bolivia whose government sold the rights to their water supply to a San Francisco company Bechtel. The Bolivian's ended up having to pay a quarter of their salary to get water. Bechtel wouldn't even allow them to gather rainwater. The Bolivians take to the street to protest and end up recovering their water. It's a hopeful story, but after seeing so many other horrible things, it doesn't manage to lift my spirits. (www.thecorporation.tv)

Super Size Me seems easier to digest. Pun intend. I have gone for years without eating at McDonald's and have no problem doing so. Like filmmaker Morgan Spurlock, the star of **Super Size Me**, I laughed when I heard two girls were suing McDonald's for making them fat. Spurlock went a bit further and decided he would see what a McDonald's diet would do to him.

For one month Spurlock eats only McDonald's food for three meals per day. At the beginning he has three doctors and a nutritionist examine him. He is in good health and over the month we see his health deteriorate. The fact that Spurlock gains so much weight and destroys his liver on this diet isn't what really interested me in the film. I expect something like that to happen. That the doctors don't expect it to happen and seem kind of shocked that it does is kind of strange. I really would expect doctors to be more knowledgeable about these things.

Spurlock also explores the role of the food industry as well as the dieting industry in our society. The worst case being school cafeteria lunches. Food suppliers get contracts to supply schools with their products by convincing schools that they will benefit monetarily from the services. The food suppliers make big profits and the school sees little of the money. Spurlock examines what the kids are eating. One girl purchases two bags of chips. When he asks the teacher if she is worried about that girl having that for lunch the teacher figures she has probably brought her lunch. As it turns out she hasn't.

One school has Jared the spokesman for Subway come to talk to their children about how he lost all his weight. He holds up his extra large pants. The kids get him sign autographs. One overweight girl tells how she talked to Jared about her weight problem, but she was worried about not being able to afford two Subway sandwiches per day. Her mother just stands by not saying anything.

There is a school in Wisconsin that supplies healthy lunches that cost the same as what other schools pay. The students in this school are better behaved and pay attention in class. Yet the food lobby is so powerful and seems to permeate many facets of our society including schools. Spurlock gets a lobby spokesman to admit that yes they are the problem, but they are also the solution. Needless to say that guy was fired. Congress even passed the Cheeseburger Bill that protects fast food restaurants from being sued for making people fat. It is nice to see the government once again looking out for the American People's best interests.

Super Size Me doesn't have any real solutions for America's weight problem. It simply points out a bunch of possible causes. I bet after a while people will forget all about the film and start eating fast food again, if they stopped at all. The audience I viewed the film with laughed uncontrollably every time a fat person was shown on the screen. When I looked around at all the people munching on popcorn and candy, I didn't see a group of perfect people. I think they missed the point that this film was aimed at them too.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com

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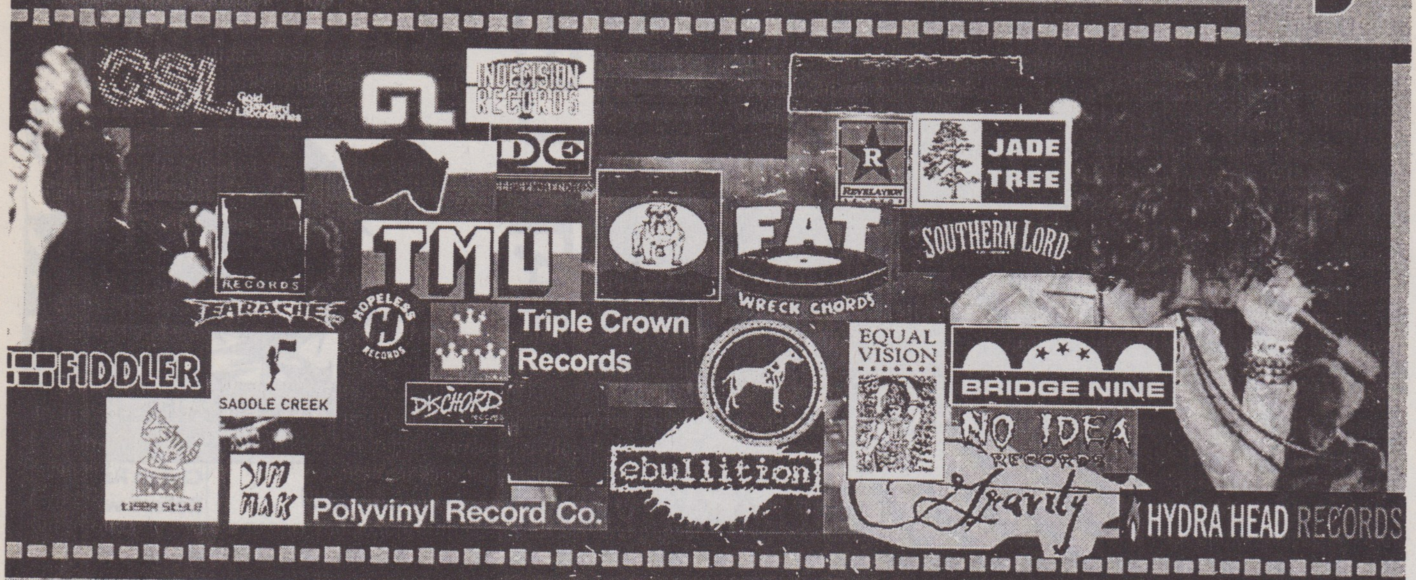

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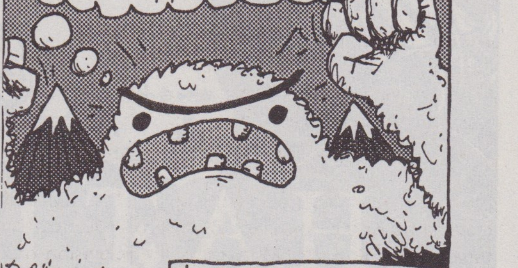

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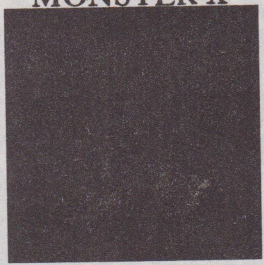

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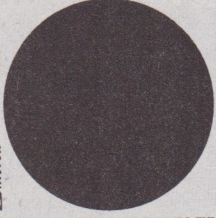

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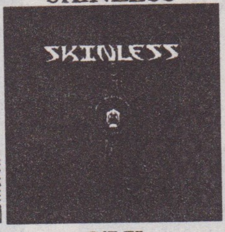

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AAARGH! – "Do You Fucking Care?" CD

Punks and Skins styled hardcore from France. Goofy, raw and unpolished with a fast sing-along chorus style to break up the fast riffs and speedy vocal delivery—lyrics of a semi-socio-political nature, natch. They would fit in perfect with the UK glue and cider punks of the early mid-80s, bringing to mind DISORDER or a super-super-sloppy CHAOS UK. Good fun. The booklet comes with lyrics (sung in English), loads of photos and each of the band member's phone numbers. (WM)

(David Boussard, 11 Rue de la Charentonne, 78711 – Mantes la Ville, FRANCE)

ABSCESS / MACHETAZO – split EP

A bit of a turn from ABSCESS' usual gore-grind—first it's messy hardcore that reminded me of old C.O.C., but then it switches into a sloppy stoner riff (which could be like new C.O.C. I suppose, just not as wretched as that). Except for the vocals, this is much more hardcore than grind, and very raw and loose at that. Not bad. Spain's CARCASS conquistadors MACHETAZO deliver more top-notch, pummmeling grind. This is much heavier, tighter and faster than last I heard them- and they were good back then. This is really fucking good. Grind fans will warm to this like a heating pad on an ear infection. (EL)

(Throne, PO Box 8035, 33200 Gijon, SPAIN, **www.thronerecords.com**)

ABNORMI – "Avunhuuto" EP

Finland's ABNORMI crank out eight blasts of rough, thrashing hardcore that borrows heavily from the later era of Finnish 80s hardcore. While I'm normally a fan of crappy production, this time around it just sort of takes away from the power this record *could* have. The riffs are there; speedy and well played, nice snarly vocals, steamroller drums—but something feels lacking. Best track is "Entä Huomenna" with its nod to LAMA's sense of melody and hooks. (MT)

(If Society, Jyrängöntie 7 as 1, 00550 Helsinki, FINLAND, info@insociety.com)

ACCION MUTANTE – "Ghetto Europa" 10"

Bulldozer German crust-war and annihilation. Dual singers gargling with asphalt and throwing up concrete over a pulverizing wall of brutality; metal edged crust riffs, fast tempos, thrashing audio war. Musically they could be compared to DESTROY!, but with a thicker sounding recording. Lyrics in English and printed on a fold-out poster. (WM)

(www.accion-mutante.de, info@accion-mutante.de)

ACTIVE SAC – "Salt and Shovels" EP

Novice emo punk. Decent enough musically in a wannabe GAME FACE or TAKING BACK SUNDAY way. Unfortunately with the printed lyrics, I just get a "It sucks to live with your parents " vibe. (RL)

(Gothic Anus Records, 806 Johahn Dr., Westminister, MD 21158)

AGATHOCLES / KUOLEMA – split EP

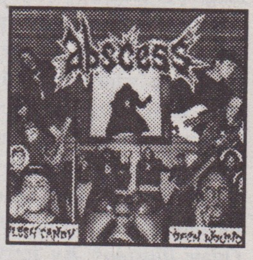
Oh joy, yet another AGATHOCLES 7". Their side of the record is what it always is—standard grind, but still pretty decent. The vocals are more distorted than I remember them usually being. Can't say I listen to these guys much anymore, but whenever I do, I still like 'em. KUOLEMA, from Finland, play extremely lo-fi grind. After multiple spins, I still cannot for the life of me figure out what speed the record is meant to be played on. Either way it's so insanely raw and noisy you might not guess its instruments they're playing as opposed to some eyewitness train wreck recording. (EL)

(Agromosh, PO Box 2480, Escondido, CA 92033, ben_agromosh@yahoo.com)

AGATHOCLES – "Alive & Mincing" CD

Long running Belgian mince-masters, AGATHOCLES, return with an excellent live recording from late 2000. Twenty-eight tracks of punk-metal-grind-hardcore destruction , AKA "mince-core," as only AGATHOCLES know how. Fans will need this for their collection; newbies will find a decent place to start into the band's vast catalog. (WM)

(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702, www.cahrecords.com)



AI – "Ain't No Slaves" EP

Rampaging, and powerful mid-paced hardcore from these Japanese punx. Reminds me a bit of the newer DSB stuff in its heavy borrowing of trad Japanese hardcore mixed with a tinge of UK82 blasts. Good stuff. (MT)
(Bloodsucker, 1-16-18-403 Kusonoki-Chou, Nishi-Ku, Hiroshima-City, JAPAN 733-0002, www.bloodsucker-record.com)

ALL OR NOTHING H.C. – "What Doesn't Kill You..." CD

This sounds great. Put together, I start thinking of LOST WORLD and ANTI-SCHISM. Sounds great. Reads terribly: "Freedom of worship...keep the separation of church and state" and; "This is democracy...make your educated vote" and the worst: "You are responsible...don't let them tear our constitution apart" Huh? First of all, I thought we were trying to destroy religion and government, not pretend that any freedom lies therein. Secondly, what the fuck is this voting encouragement shite? For the 81 years that all adults have legally been allowed to vote (33 years for 18 year olds), has our nation become kinder? Has our oppression lessoned? Not in my neighborhood. And thirdly, I would like to laugh out loud now at any one who thinks the constitution holds any freedoms worth anything to anybody but the rich, white fuckers back then who were only trying to advance their own wealth and cooperation between corporation and government, which thanks to the peoples belief in this fraud, has continued to this day. (see: *Toward An American Revolution: Exposing The Constitution And Other Illusions.* By Jerry Sresia) Renae, the vocalist, seems like a bright, but unfortunately mainstream educated woman with belief in the system that created the culture which creates the rape and the suicides and the child abuse she rails against. This record is sneakily naïve and encourages hope with the American paradigm. And they "Thank My Lord Jesus Christ." That shit ain't punk. (JA)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143 Allston, MA. 02135)

ALONE IN A CROWD - "Is Anybody There" EP

It is very interesting that this band is held in such high regard now. I am not saying that this 7" doesn't deserve the praise that it has recently received in the last two years. It is certainly an incredible record, and I'm glad someone finally did a proper re-issue. But when people start comparing this band to SIDE BY SIDE because they share the same vocalist, I hope they can step back and remind themselves that this band was more of a NYHC all-star studio project than anything else. They played one show. Still, the music is catchy as hell. Jules lyrics, while seemingly disenfranchised with hardcore, still come off as heartfelt as anything he ever wrote for his previous band. I can even forgive his ridiculously over the top lyrics to "When Tigers Fight". This record is to SIDE BY SIDE what *What Holds Us Apart* is to CHAIN OF STRENGTH. It's a coming of age farewell by a kid who just wanted to know "Is anybody there? Does anybody care?" (CC)
(Contrast, PO Box 2492, Providence, RI 02906)

ARMITAGE SHANKS – "Urinal Heap" CD

The latest from this UK garage punk rock band. Out of the BUFF MEDWAYS and BILLY CHILDISH scene, these spit out some straight forward punk as if they were still youths. If only all those reunited UK street punk bands still sounded this fresh. (RL)
(Damaged Goods)

ARTIMUS PYLE – "Fucked from Birth" LP

Man, ARTIMUS PYLE just keeps getting better and better. I was totally floored by their side most recent 7" reviewed many months back, but this new record is even better! Being in very much step with the dark hardcore punk we've known to expect from Prank, *Fucked from Birth* is an absolutely pummeling assault on the fucked up society in which we are all knowingly or unknowingly suffocating.ARTIMUS PYLE also seems to have upped the ante on this record in terms of having more songs with innovative structures combined with a more finely tuned sense of truly haunting moods and riffage. Also, the presence of droning epics like "Decisions" and "No Birds" really work well to add a bit of depth and character to the record as a whole. Completely necessary. (SP)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.prankrecords.com)

ASPHALT – "Thrash Kill a Move" EP

Awesome Japanese hardcore played in a traditional style akin to DEATHSIDE or LIP CREAM with hints of GAUZE in the frantic delivery and some of the song structuring. The more this plays the more I'm converted to their brand of hardcore. The backup vocals are handled by folks from COLORED RICEMEN, EXTINCT GOVERNMENT, CROSSFACE and others. Awesome record. (WM)
(Blood Sucker, 1-16-1-403 Kunoki-Chou Nishi-Ku, Hiroshima City, Japan 733-0002, www.bloodsuckerrecord.com)

ATOM SMASHERS / DELOREANS – split EP

((The)(e)) ATOMSMASHERS belt out two catchy, melodic style punk tunes with just a tad of fuzz thrown in, just for the fuck of it. This is my kind of music. You see, I like the catchy shit, but not when it gets all whimped out. I like bouncing my head around and this allows me to do just that. DELOREANS deliver a similar plate of food, though they omitted the fuzz factor and threw in a sort of new wave factor. Pretty cool stuff and an EP worth looking for. (KK)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3A, 43100 Parma, ITALY, www.rockinbones.it)

AWOL – "Another Way of Living!" EP

Whoa. This is really good. AWOL (hailing from Syracuse of all places) play fast hardcore with a punk edge. *Another Way of Living!* contains six smokin' tracks including a solid LIFE SENTENCE cover. If you are a fan of early KILL YOUR IDOLS, then you definitely need to check this out. (CC)
(Reaper, PO Box 2935, Liverpool, NY 13089, www.reaperhardcore.com)

BAD BUSINESS – CD

BAD BUSINESS bring us well-produced, fast hardcore with hard-hitting breakdowns. But this is definitely not your average traditional hardcore band. As I mentioned in my column, this band separates themselves from the pack because of their unusual vocalist. Not to discount their use of creative guitar riffs or interesting transitions (some one in this band likes his share of metal hardcore), I still think what could make this band tough to get into for some people is the vocalist. Regardless, this is one of the more original straight edge hardcore bands out there right now (and I mean that is a good way). These guys can definitely play their instruments. This CD contains their 7", their demo, comp tracks, and a few extras. (CC)
(Grave Mistake, 899 Kings Retreat Drive, Davidsonville, MD 21035)

BALZAC – "Atom Age Vampire in 308" EP

I'm not all that familiar with these guys, as I do know there is a "wanna be the Misfits" thing going on. But they don't sound all that much like the MISFITS. In fact they are pretty pop. You know the MISFITS didn't invent the "whoa". This kinda reminds me of GIGANTOR in sound and quality. Although this band does seem to be down with the vampires and such. Good catchy PR. (RL)
(G-Force Records, www.balzac-europe.com)

BANNLYST – "Shitty Bootleg" LP

Okay this sucks, no info, no lyrics, no pictures, no nothing! God what a fucking waste—and it sucks too cause BANNLYST were the fucking kings, totally classic mid-80s Norwegian hardcore that just pummels away in a style akin to BASTARD. Thick guitars, crushing riffs and those vocals! Total

prototype for what so many modern hardcore bands are going for—deep, guttural and commanding without delving down into lame grind bark territory. Their releases are just totally brilliant, really, and deserve a proper re-release, which Heart First records will be doing soon. Pass on this, save your money for the real deal release. (MT)
(no address)

BARSTOOL HOOLIGANS – "Cheap Shots" CD

Okay, with a name like BARSTOOL HOOLIGANS I thought I knew what to expect but this is even worse than I'd imagined. Imagine if ANTI-SEEN pretended they were from a bog instead of a swamp. This has all got to stop, I'm almost insulted (and that's almost impossible) DROPKICK MURPHIES—you're getting your knees done... (AD)
(www.barstoolhooligans.com)

BENT OUTTA SHAPE – 12"

I swear to fucking Christ that if I didn't know these dudes were from New York, I'd think this was some sorta long lost East Bay punk demo that Capt. Cometbus pulled out of his magic storage space. Songs about being drunk, making out, riding bikes etc etc. Highly influenced by all things *Scam*, *Cometbus*, SHOTWELL, MIAMI, ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT etc. they would have fit in perfect on *The Thing That Ate Floyd* comp or sharing bills with CRIMPSHRINE way back when. I really like the strained vocals and the primitive production which showcases their mastery of melody quite well. Good stuff. (MT)
(Drunk Tank, 229 Maujer St. #2R, Brooklyn, NY 11206, www.drunktankrecords.com)

BEYOND DESCRIPTION – "A Road to a Brilliant Future" CD

Full-throttle speedy thrash from Japan—fuck, this record rules. This is archetypal thrash, quintessential crossover, a perfectly balanced mix of metal and punk. It's still mostly thrash in a punk sorta way, but the cut-off jean jacket vests and BC Rich guitars make it clear they've been listening to their NUCLEAR ASSAULT records too. Metal riffs, punk riffs, double kick, high energy, 1-note two-second guitar solos and lyrics in Japanese- what more could you want? Fans of DRI, MUNICIPAL WASTE, STRONG INTENTION, etc will definitely dig this. (EL)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702, **www.cahrecords.com)**

BLACK FURIES – "Black Furies" CD

Enjoyable Bay Area punk 'n' roll with loads of meaty guitars and hair grease. Some more song variation would be nice, but at least they do manage to rock all the way through. (SR)
(Take Root, **www.takerootrecords.com)**

BLACK LIPS – "We Did Not Know the Forest Spirit Made the Flowers Grow" LP

Lavish-dee-luxe presentation from 70s institution Bomp Recs—I wouldn't have imagined the BLACK LIPS on Greg Shaw's label when I laid ears on their first single (last year?), but I can see how their roller-rink psychedelia might appeal to the guy on a gut level. It's echo-laden stuff, like recorded-in-an-airplane-hangar level echoey to the degree that the music itself is difficult to peg. The BLACK LIPS are hit-and-miss when it comes to technical flash but stir up a kind of drawing-room chaos that draws me in—despite my best efforts. "Time of the Scab" is a lighters-up ballad that sounds like a rejected REMAINS track or outtake off some obscure 60s comp. Folky blues and rhythm, dorky novelty tunes ("100 New Fears") and teenage vocal cords straining against their upper register. The BLACK LIPS could be hated by the Punker Than Thous and self-important indie kids, but these brats could usher in a new generation of paint-huffers. (JH)
(Bomp!, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510, www.bomp.com)

BLACK MARKET FETUS – "Midwest Meltdown" CD

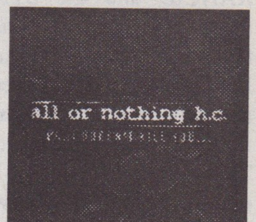
Half of my family being from Iowa, I greatly appreciate and sympathize with the malcontent and general pissed-off'dness that permeates every note from these Des Moines maniacs. Eighteen bulldozing thrash/grind tunes built on a solid foundation of old-school metal riffs- think POSSESSED meets DRI and SOD. It's hard for me to pick my favorite lyrics, but the front-runners are: "death sounds like a blessing to me, like the end of a sandwich" and "We are heavy metal demons, spewing acid semen, destroying without reason- yeah!!!" The record even ends with a 10-minute thrash epic. Fucking ripping, dude. (EL)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave., Cotati, CA 94931)

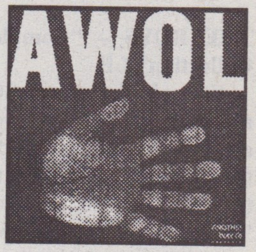
BLACK MARKET FETUS / DISCIDER – split CD

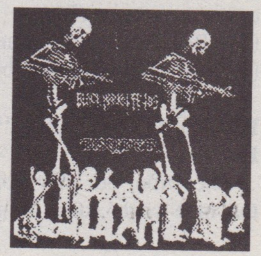
BLACK MARKET FETUS, hailing from the infernal wastelands of Iowa, lay down nine blasts of blackened metallic crust destruction, while Wisconsin's DISCIDER show what the Cheese State has to offer for brutal, crushing D-Beat. This is the CD re-issue of the previously released split 7" from these monsters with the added bonus of extra songs from each group—BLACK MARKET FETUS' is from the previously released *Murder Machines* 7". (WM)
(First Blood Family, PO Box 1766, Madison, WI 53701, www.firstbloodfamily.com)

BLOOD FOR BLOOD – "Outlaw Anthems" LP

You hardcore punks and skinheads don't need to be introduced to BLOOD FOR BLOOD. This behemoth of a Boston hardcore machine has crushed the kids worldwide for quite a few years. This material was recorded throughout 2001 at the Outpost Studios, Stoughton, Massachusetts. Many young hardcore fans have great memories from BLOOD FOR BLOOD shows in this era. The band has proven themselves time and time again. On this LP, you get ten BLOOD FOR BLOOD originals including, "Ain't Like You," "Dead End Street," "White Trash Anthem," "Some Kind of Hate" and a fucking awe inspiring cover of THE BRUISERS (New Hampshire) song, "Bloodshed". Great stuff! You die-hard BLOOD FOR BLOOD fanatics probably have this material on CD, but the German







vinyl packaging is quite tempting—buy now punk! (BR)
(Knock Out Records, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY, www.knock-out.de)

BOMBSHELLS – CD

More OC snotty punk 'n' roll with vocals that oddly enough, remind me of Jesse Luscious. These guys obviously enjoy newer RANCID and the STICHES. Dynamics straight off of *Indestructible* (not that I like that records… or ever heard it… okay, maybe I liked it just a little) and enough group vocals and talking of backseats, Saturday nights, fights, and excessive use of the word "baby". This is by no means bad. This if really fun if nothing else. Cliché as, well, OC, but never the less, very fun music to bounce around to. (BM)
(PO Box 3361 Burbank, CA 91508-3361, thebombshells@cs.com)

BOYJ'AZZ – "In the City Tonight" CD

Very competent, well conceived and executed bar room indie rock. Would have no problem finding a slot as MTV background music. Sound good? (RW)
(Frenetic, www.frenticrecords.com)

THE BOYS – "Complete Punk Singles Collection" LP

First off, I'm a huge BOYS fanatic. I love me some BOYS. They were great songwriters, great musicians and did everything from the snotty early UK punk thing, to new wave, to power pop, to whatever you wanna call "Boys Only". The band was outstanding. I'd put them second to only the RAMONES in my fanatical devotion to anything to do with them. I'm not saying everything thing they did was gold, but there's no denying their greatness, importance, nor influence… however, this collection of singles is kinda pointless. I mean yes, it's nice to have all their 45's on one LP, but a few years ago Get Back reissued all of their albums with the singles as bonus tracks, Captain Oi! did a CD collection called *Punk Rock Rarities* that collected some of the singles plus demos that were recorded between *Alternative Chartbusters* and *To Hell With the Boys* (intended to be an album themselves if I remember correctly), so needless to say all of this stuff is out there and very accessible, heck like I said you can get this stuff from Get Back already. This is really just for fan boy completists like me. So I guess on that note, I'm off to the record store to get me a copy. (BM)
(Get Back, srl—via Aretina, 25-50069, Sieci (Firenze), ITALY, www.abraxasrecords.com)

BRODY'S MILITIA – "Tribute Through Butchery" EP

Nice title, but they don't totally butcher the nine cover tunes originally by SOCK-EYE, the CIRCLE JERKS, ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT, ANTiSEEN, DEVO, BLACK SABBATH among others. These jokers give each song a dirty, metal sound that is mixed so loud there's a natural distortion no matter how quiet you play it. By maxing out the levels, BRODY'S MILITIA achieves a nice live, intense sound. Cool record. (HM)
(Brody's Militia, PO Box 377, Mount Orab, OH 45154, skrupel@web.de)

BULLET TRAIN TO VEGAS – "This Bed's Meant for Two" EP

The thing about naming your band after a song title is that many well-informed listeners will immediately have an idea of who exactly you're attempting to worship. In this case, BULLET TRAIN TO VEGAS—having the same name as a fucking awesome DRIVE LIKE JEHU song—do in fact take many musical cues from JEHU and HOT SNAKES. Not at all a bad thing in my book. This is especially true of the guitar work and song structures which have Jon Reis written all over them. The vocals, however, have a much more youthful, melodic, and even poppy (perhaps juvenile?) feel than Rick Fork's trademark yowls. At some times this is endearing, but I can see how some JEHU diehards could likely perceive BULLET TRAIN TO VEGAS taking something sacred in vein. This is always something bands should keep in mind when they name themselves after any sort of reference to any seemingly "legendary band." From my perspective though, I like what BULLET TRAIN TO VEGAS does here. The guitar work is actually pretty interesting and the production here is quite superb. (SP)
(Never Could, www.nevercouldrecordings.cjb.net)

BURNING IMAGE – CD

A goth punk band from the 80s from Bakersfield. Yes, that Bakersfield! This actually has more of a post-punk feel than pure Goth. Think UK/DK and SIOUXSIE. Old stuff with three recent tracks included as well. A welcome buried treasure. (RL)
(Alternative Tentacles, www.burningimageband.com)

CASINO VOLANTE / WAISTCOASTS – split 2 x EP

OK, it's actually two separate EPs, one by each band, packaged together, but "split double EP" sounds cooler. WAISTCOATS go from moody and go-go instros with DAVE "BABY" CORTEZ touches to maraca rattling rhythm and beat (and an okay cover of the MOVING SIDEWALKS' "99th Floor"). CASINO VOLANTE are trad surf with some extra rhythm oomph (where were you in '92?). Rockin' Bones records, you've done it again! (DD)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3A, 43100 Parma, ITALY, www.rockinbones,it)

CHARGE 69 – "Univers sale" LP

This is great mid-tempo catchy punk rock from France. The fun of the COCKNEY REJECTS comes to mind with a bit of CLASH-like reggae on a couple tracks. It's all in French with no translations so I can't say much about content, but it sounds great. (SR)
(Knock out, Postfach 10 07 16, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY, www.charge69.com)

CLOSE CALL – "The Miller Sessions" EP

What we have here is two covers and two originals on a one sided 7" with a nice John Peel Sessions rip-off cover. Their renditions of the DYS and CIRCLE JERKS songs are well done. Their two originals take a more modern approach, with gruff vocals and solid song writing. If you've never heard this band, I would definitely check out the *Someone Talked* 7" first. Not bad, but nothing special. (CC)
(Painkiller, www.painkillerrecords.com)

A COMMON GROUND – "Waiting for a Change to Come" CD

A pleasingly multicultural effort. As far as I can tell, this is a German band (that sings in English, surprise surprise), with a release on a Canadian label, playing the SoCal melodic smooth hardcore stuff. Reminds me a lot of mid-period RANDY mixed with STRUNG OUT. Enjoyable stuff, if that's your thing. (RK)
(Triple Threat, www.triplethreatrecords.com)

CONCUBINE FORMING – "The Guilt Will Kill" CD

Very terror-drenched is this disc of screeching drum machine angst. This is over-simplification, but BIG BLACK. Not as metronomic perhaps, but speaking as a member of the listening audience, I say BIG BLACK. This record would be on Amphetamine Reptile if it were still 1993, but it ain't. It's not that interesting to me, but I am old and withered and the ears of the Youth may not be so similarly blasé. Stick to their 7" I say. (RW)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

CONELRAD – "Bezoar" EP

A two-piece from Pennsylvania featuring an ex-member of CREATION IS CRUCIFIXION, if that means anything. Short sharp bursts that run from spazzed-out weirdness to thrash to math rock to metalcore. They do a cover of "Paranoid Chant" by the MINUTEMEN that comes off sounding more like BLACK FLAG or something. This is a pretty

cool four-song EP. (AM)
($4 ppd; Hope, PO Box 71154, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, www.hoperecords.com)

CONGA FURY – "Bullshit Disster" EP

"Fury" is right—CONGA FURY offers a set of eight madly over-modulated HC tunes, offering a sound something like Australia's SICK THINGS played on a fast turntable. Great Japanese trash—at times, it almost has a heated REGISTRATORS feel, albeit with alternating male and (awesome) female vocals. Unrelenting, great stuff, very possibly mastered on sandpaper. (SS)
(Crucial, c/o Negative Tom, 48 Camino Alto, Millbrae, CA 94030)

CONTENT 2 DROWN – "Fire in the Hole" CD

For a self-released CD, this sounds like very slick and produced indie rock, which just goes to show how little I know about Pro Tools magic. I'm sure it's just one guy in a poorly lit room. Having said that, I don't really hear any of the spit or spark that makes for a good punk record, or any of the flat out weirdness that makes for good art-punk. Just a chugging middle-of-the-road indie rock record. (RW)
(no address)

CONTRAVENE – "Prison Sells" EP

…And when I say Peace Punk, I mean it. Three songs totally relevant and full of important knowledge. Long, developed lyrics ala CONFLICT in the essay style. Extensive writings on the songs basis. Not typical "what this song means, cuz you can't figure it out yourself" but real information about what inspired them to write. And the words even rhyme in a good way! CONTRAVENE remind me of early pre-CHRIST ON PARADE East Bay political anarchist bands like TREASON or A STATE OF MIND. But, I guess they could also be compared to CHUMBAWAMBA's punk stuff from *Pictures Of Starving…* Fucking amazing. (JA)
(Catchphraze, PO Box 41356,Phoenix, AZ. 85080)

CZOLGOSZ / EN LA OLLA – split EP

EN LA OLLA sound like both early 80s French bouncy punk and 80s Polish stuff. The full choruses give one a mind to go back and listen to KLINIKA (one of Poland's seminal hardcore outfits). I think they are singing in Spanish, but seeing as how I am an ugly American, I am not sure. Combined with all these varied influences, is the fact that they seem to hail from New York. Weird. Now CZOLGOSZ. Rock 'n' roll intros leading to some kinda shit you don't hear too much no more: exciting, yelling, high end soloing simple drum punky goodness. I mean OPERATION IVY without the ska. Nice slab here. I would get it. (JA)
(Sep.06, PO Box 629, Boston, MA. 02117)

DEAN DIRG – "The Last Kid on the Block" 12"

This is pretty tough, it sounds like SLAPSHOT on 45, actually it *is* on 45 but you get what I'm saying. Catchy tunes and a little guitar jangliness here and there completely lays waste to any possible knucklehead association leaving just good high octane hardcore punk rock ala HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE. I think they're from Germany. (AD)
(Stereodrive, Von Streuben Str. 17, 48143 Munster, GERMANY)

THE DELAYED – "Losing My Mind" CD

This quartet is going for the SOCIAL DISTORTION sound. In some ways they've got it down as good as BROKEN BOTTLES, but it's still far from the classic SOCIAL D. These five tunes are fairly solid, but I'll stick with the master, MIKE NESS. (HM)
(www.thedelayed.com)

DESOLATION – "Awake" EP

High-energy crusty straight-ahead hardcore here from this Oakland five-piece. These guys do what they do very well. Solid driving riffs, completely pissed vocals, and a punishing metallic, raw sound. Fans of all things Scandinavian or akin to TRAGEDY won't be disappointed. Comes with poster. Good stuff. (EL)
(No Options, PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623)

DESPITE – "No Promise of Tomorrow" CD

Dark wailing crustcore from Wisconsin (or *Disconsin* as it says in the insert) that brings to mind bands like DOOM. This band formed out of the demise of URBN DK and has been around for a while. The lyrics are heavy on the politics and anger and they have all been translated into Spanish. A worthy effort for sure. (RC)
(Crimes Against Humanity, www.cahrecords.com)

DIXIE BUZZARDS – "Ain't Going Back" EP

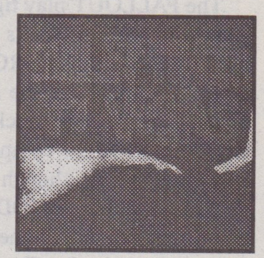
When I say this sounds like the GORIES I mean that in the best way, as these guys channel that band they same way oodles of bands successfully channel the DEVIL DOGS. The template can accommodate all kinds of input, and these guys pretty much sound like they're releasing GORIES demos under an assumed name. Quality. (RW)
(Big Black Hole, www.bigblackholerecords.tk)

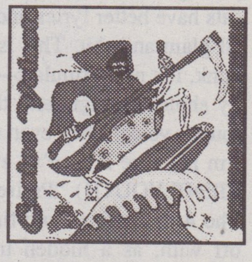
DÖDSDÖMD – "Samhällets Fiender Nummer Ett" LP

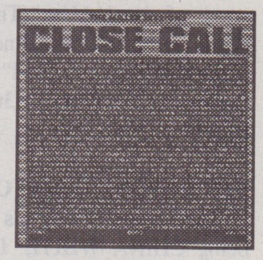
Fucking right! Crushing Swedish hardcore fury—thick production on this driving home its totally relentless delivery. One part UNCURBED's rocking sensibility, one part TRAGEDY's sense of melody, and all parts energy through the roof, relentless guitars and shattered strained vocals. Fucking great!! (MT)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092 – 200 42 Malmö, SWEDEN, www.putridfilth.com)

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN – "We Will Bury You!" 2xLP

Two LPs and a bonus 7" single. All on colored vinyl. Thirty-one tracks in all, all of them covers of classic songs. All completely crap. Having my stitches removed yesterday was less painful than sitting through four plus sides of this dreck. Fucking hell, who needs to hear ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN doing IRON MAIDEN? Really, who needs to hear ELECTIC







FRANKENSTEIN? This is a collection of covers recorded from 1991-2003 for various tributes, b-sides and such. Everything about this is just plain wrong. Their version of CRIME'S "Frustration" is a fucking tragedy. A rendition of PINK FLOYD'S "Wish You Were Here" made me nauseous. I just hope poor old Strummer passed on before he heard ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN's version of "1977". I won't list all the bands they butcher but you could guess them all, you know MISFITS, NEW YORK DOLLS, MOTORHEAD, blah blah...Fuck. (RR)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA. 23221)

THE FALLOUT – "Turning Revolution Into Money" CD
The FALLOUT play tight, upbeat melodic punk with heaps of hooks and attitude. STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, FORGOTTEN REBELS, MORAL CRUX and the BODIES all spring to mind on the first track alone. The FORGOTTEN REBELS comparison sticks all the way through this, (though I can't imagine the REBELS putting WOODY GUTHRIE-type union folk samples in their records) not surprising since they're Canadian, though these cats have better lyrics and hopefully won't go all glam and shit. This is great catchy snotty punk, it's not formulaic—their own personality shines through, and the guy's got a great (punk) voice. They even do a version of (and I'm not sure if they've even heard of IMPATIENT YOUTH) "Praise the Lord and Pass The Ammunition" and finish the whole thing off with, as a hidden track, an impeccable cover of the JAM's "(This Is) the Modern World" with the great line "I don't give two fucks about your review!" Brilliant! (AD)
(Longshot, PMB#72, 302 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211)

FANG – "Live Cheap" CD
The second CD in this live series, the first being CHINA WHITE. Live stuff from the mid 80's as well as a recent show. Former Boner recording artists, you can't go wrong here if you dig the classic Bay Area hardcore thing. (RL)
(Malt Soda, PO Box 7611, Chandler , AZ 85246, gluedevil@hotmail.com)

THE FEELERS – "Fuhrer's New Miniskirt" EP
Columbus, Ohio, the last place you'd expect to find this type of jagged jittery switchblade sonic wail. Rocking is the right word but like a lot of the padded cell combos pouring outta off Chicago this act injects a bit off schizophrenia buzz into its sound. Low-fi and dirty with a slight hint off the MOTARDS, TYRADES and DADDY-O-WHORES, more vinegar in the wound punk rock for this number one fan. (SD)
(Death By Noise, www.apt103.net/feelers)

FIYA – "Make Joy, Make Strength" 12"
Thick, powerful, melodic punk rock from Gainesville, Florida, but more hardcore-influenced than the kind of stuff that shows up on No Idea. There's a hint of a LEATHERFACE influence here too. The lyrics are a confessional and earnest without being cloying or overbearing, and are sung with passion. In the band photo they are all smiling and they seem like nice young chaps, not the moody types you usually get moping around in band photos. This is worth picking up. (AM)
(Obscurist Press, PO Box 13077, Gainesville, FL 32604, obscurist@hotmail.com)

FLAMINGO 50 – "My Reason" CD
I've never heard of these before, but they are awesome! A trio with a guy drummer and two gals on bass and guitar. Great screaming/singing. This band packs some punch with its "kick in the fuzzbox" approach. Think early Rough Trade mixed with early HUSKER DU. May be my favorite UK band since SCARPER and SKIMMER! (RL)
(Keith Records, www.flamingo50.co.uk)

FORWARD – "Fucked Up" 12"
Japan's FORWARD are on tour across the USA right now, and hopefully mountains of new people are getting turned onto their authoritative attack of rockin' midtempo hardcore. This here is the vinyl version of their *Fucked Up* CDEP from awhile back. Eight tracks of slamming punk with a slight pogo feel which, while not quite as powerful as their earlier more hardcore material, provide essential listening. Early reports are they are totally slaying live. (MT)
(Ugly Pop)

FOUR EYES – "Rock & Roll Playing" CD
From the nerds who brought you "Hat Nerd" (one of the greatest songs of all time (believe it or not, but if I remember correctly the songs origins oddly enough came from someone mocking the band and saying when they finally run out of stupid nerdy clichés to write about they would end up writing a song about a guy wearing hats... rather than waiting for their resources to run out they just cut to the chase and wrote "Hat Nerd"... a song about a guy that wears hats....)), comes thirteen more classic geek rock anthems. Keeping with their on going D&D/Warcraft/ RPG's (role playing games for those of you who actually had sex in high school) and all things nerdy theme they really know how to throw a party (in their mom's basement with punch and no girls). Recorded by Chris "Woody" Woodhouse at the infamous Loft, the FOUR EYES are Sacramento's older geek brothers who are always willing to lend a hand to younger bands (so long as they're back home in time for Dr Know reruns). Another band that makes music fun again. So remember, there will come a time when all your friends will ditch you and you too will be awkward and alone, and that's when the nerds will laugh back at you. They will rejoice and snort as "Compucore" plays in the background. (BM)
($8 ppd, Plastic Idol, www.foureyes.com)

THE FRENETICS – "Grey Veins to the Parking Lot" CD
Second full length. Well, mebbe they've done more than two, but this is the second one that I've been lucky enough to come across. They're from Canada, and they have a penchant for heartfelt guitar-driven power-pop. Early WIPERS springs to mind, as does early JAM. The music has a wonderful lilt, reminiscent of the jagged pop of the CURE's "Boys Don't Cry". Well worth tracking down, for sure. (RK)
(Union 2112, www.unionlabelgroup.com)

FUERZA DE LUCHA – "Marea Negra" EP
Spanish sXe-sounding stuff with something of a wrestling theme (at least to the graphics, I can't really read the lyrics...). I pulled in an expert to corroborate my opinion that this is definitely leaning towards a more modern youth-crew sound, and they do have all the requisite parts—breakdowns, backups, octave lines, and pickslides all make an appearance. Carl Cordova referenced CHAIN OF STRENGTH and I'll have to take his word for it. This is pretty good for that style. (AM)
(Sell Our Souls, PO Box 9187, 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN)

GAUZE – "City Rockers" EP
These tracks are taken from one of the ultimo rarest Japanese scene comps (*City Rockers*, natch) and showcase how GAUZE's 1982 sound has remained remarkably consistent through the years, a distorted wall of fiery fuzz that wouldn't sound all that out of place on the self titled record they did in the mid 90s. Until there is a comprehensive double CD (blech) comp of this crucial band you will have to piece the history together using boots like this one. Unlike many recent Japanese boots, however, this one has *decent sound* for once. (RW)
(Shitty Rocker)

GEISHA GIRLS – 12" EP
GEISHA GIRLS are a trio from Costa Mesa, CA who are channeling JOY DIVI-

SION/WARSAW and the GANG OF FOUR on these four cuts (although the last song pinches an AGENT ORANGE riff, so they haven't completely shaken off their SoCal roots). Mike said "you'll love it, they'll be your new favorite band" and he's not far wrong, I do love it. Art-punk without the pretentiousness. (AM)
(Geisha Girls, geishabooking@hotmail.com)

GODNOSE – "Traversing the Newly Drained Swamps" CD

Australian metal–core. We have six new studio tracks and fourteen live (2001-2002). Slick production (on the studio tracks), wanky solos, pounding drums, with the occasional blast beat, and crunchy bass. This thing has an emo, screamo tinge at times but mostly just plods along. I would imagine only fans or friends would be interested in the live part of the disc. The small crowd seems a bit bored, and I found myself straining to hear their barely audible chat over the plodding of the band. Don't know about this one. Should just be a six-song demo of sorts. Doesn't really stand out in the pack. (RR)
(Bullpit, PO Box 8232, Woolloongabba Qld, 4102, AUSTRALIA)

GORE GORE GIRLS – "Up All Night" LP

Girl-fronted 60s go-go garage rock. They sound good and can play their instruments well, but I'm getting antsy after the third or fourth song. Maybe an EP would have been a better idea. (DP)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317, www.gethip.com)

HZERO - "Dias De Rabia, Noches De Furia" EP

Twelve tracks of blazing Spanish hardcore with a strong LIFES HALT influence. If you were a fan of the songs off the WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? split, then I would recommend checking this band out. (CC)
(Mindless Mutant, PO Box 35322, 08029 Barcelona, SPAIN, www.mindlessmutant.tk)

HATEPINKS – "Parasites Like Me" LP

With a song called "I'm a Gimmick (New Wave Punque is Fuquing Shit)" it's quite easy to see me and these French bastards are going to be friends. I like a band that not only has a sense of humor, but also can see the bullshit some bands are putting out there these days. These guys may be France's answer to the BRIEFS and trust me that's a very good thing. Seven songs with the longest barely making it past the two minute mark on clear vinyl with great packaging and lay out, this alone is enough to peek my interests, but as an added bonus the songs are actually quite catchy and spazz-tastic. Another band that makes you actually feel something other than lethargy and flatulence. (BM)
(Unity Squad, PO Box 1235, Huntington Beach, CA 92647, www.unitysquadrecords.com)

THE HELPER MONKEYS – "No Release" CD

Back when I was a Sacramento resident I had the opportunity to experience how tight knit and "inbred" the punk rock scene was. Everyone was either in a band with each other, roommates or dating each other. It sounds elitist and pretentious but believe it or not in my 11 months of living there I felt more of a part of that scene and more welcomed there than in all the years I've spent kicking around the Bay Area. The HELPER MONKEYS embody what I remember and hold dear to me about the Sacramento music scene; no trend jumping, no elaborate stage costumes or pontsy dresses, just four goofy guys who loved what they were doing and loved doing it. You can call them juvenile and obnoxious, you can even call them amateurish and "generic", but these guys have more passion for what they are doing than just about any band I have ever seen. They remind me of the first time I heard GREEN DAY or SCREECHING WEASEL (y'know before their lawyers got involved); just fun snotty pop punk that stands out above the rest. Every time I get the chance to catch them live they manage to not only send me on this nostalgic trip back to '96 but they just amaze me how much better they get. Every batch of new songs is better and catchier than the last and this CD is the best of the best. Don't expect rocket science, just take the stick out of your ass and put down your martini or high ball or whatever you kids drink these days, and just remember how much fun things were before you had a dress code. (BM)
($11 ppd; 4736 Hazelwood Ave, Carmichael, CA 95608, www.thehelpermonkeys.com)

THE HOLLYWOODS / FREEWAY JACKALS – split EP

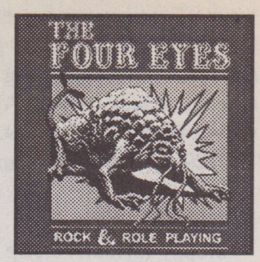
There'll always be a corner of this earth where some kids are blasting some instro surf into a boom box, and wherever the HOLLYWOODS are standing is one of those spots. A revved-up original plus a cover of "Angel Fuck," making the instro version of MISFITS tunes a certified trend. FREEWAY JACKALS provide two slices of quite good psychobilly with femme vocals (duly noted only because of its rarity in the genre). S'alright! (DD)
(45, fourty5records@hotmail.com).

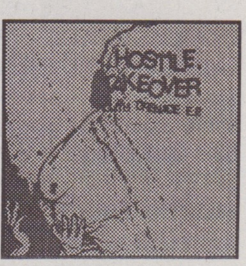
HOSTILE TAKEOVER – "Youth Grenade" EP

Kick-ass thrash punk, as the kids might say. The label's called Crucial Records, what do you think it's going to sound like? It's well played and definitely does tip the scale on the crucial side. The song titles are pretty funny ("Risk Takers & Orgasm Fakers"?) but the lyrics cover the usual subjects—friendship, skating, the scene, and youth power. Nice screenprinted cover too. (AM)
(Crucial, 48 Camino Alto, Millbrae, CA 94030)

HOT CROSS – "Fair Trades and Farewells" 12"

It must really suck to be a real emo band right now. If someone asks you what kind of music you play, and you say "emo," they're going to assume you sound like TAKING BACK SUNDAY or some other shit. HOT CROSS play emo with the "-core" intact—impassioned vocals over driving rhythms with crazy duelling guitars. It's a tried and true combination. Actually the guitars set them apart—they're often playing conflicting melodies that seem to mesh together into something that makes sense. I hope for their sake that the current





wave of mainstreamo goes away very soon. Unless they're hoping to get caught up in it and make millions pouting for MTV, in which case, good luck to 'em. (AM)
(Level Plane, PO Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906, www.level-plane.com)

I ATTACK – LP

Sloppy melodic snotty hardcore that definitely fits in well with the current wave of primitive Chicago punk. I could see them fitting in well on show with either TYRADES or with PUNCH IN THE FACE. Raw, moderately distorted guitars and the spat out yet discernable vocals definitely set this apart from a good deal of the more screechy 300-mph 'core that set the standard for the Chicagoland scene for so long. Almost sounds like some long lost demo circa 1985—oh yeah ex-CRUDOS (and it's not Martin for once) for those of you keeping score. Great! (MT)
(A Wrench In The Gears, 1133 Hunter Rd., Wilmette, IL 60091, www.wrenchrecords.com)

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT – "Poverty is Violence" LP

Man, what a noisy mess... I somehow recall their records being a lot more engaging and dare I say musical—this time around instead of the rhythmatic EX-meets-DOG-FACED HERMANS feel, IMPRATICAL COCKPIT plunges you into a cacophony of sheer weirdness akin to *Confusion is Sex*-era SONIC YOUTH, but without the songs. (MT)
($6 ppd; TRD, PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152)

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT / NUCLEAR FAMILY – split LP

I have waxed effusive for the COCKPIT's style of sloppy-avant rantage, and this new split keeps the bar high as they continue to wail thru the cobwebs using the dead body of the DOG FACED HERMANS as their personal set of bagpipes. The flip by NUCLEAR FAMILY is a little more roots conscious, very SLITS and KLEENEX in a mid 90s Kill Rock Stars kind of way, and sounding fresh for all of that as the naïve charm cuts thru my overeducated palette. I hope these bands make it out West, I won't miss 'em. (RW)
(Friends and Relatives, PO Box 23, Bloomington, IN 47402)

IN ARMS REACH – "Momento Me" EP

IN ARMS REACH is from Belgium and sounds like any number of the thousands of bands around the world who want to sound like BANE and/or AMERICAN NIGHTMARE. Cool I guess if you just can't get enough of that stuff—I for one can't seem to avoid it enough. (SP)
(Anger Management, Nijvelsebaan 161, 3060 Korbeek-Dijle, BELGIUM, www.am-records.com)

INGA – "Aketekure" EP

Having just seen PAINTBOX at Gilman, I'm sort of embarrassed to say that I almost want to draw a comparison between Hiroshima's INGA and PAINTBOX only because both bands have a slightly melodic, yet very rough punk sound—almost primal. With *Aketekure* ("Open It"), INGA sounds to me like a bit of DSB mixed with a bit of LIP CREAM. The only thing that I really see as making INGA a little bit special in comparison are the vocals which are a little more abrasive and in your face to me than the aforementioned. When I turned the record over though, there seemed to be an additional lead vocalist as well as a keyboard track that seemed to do a little more harm than good. Either way, a decent record and worth checking out. (SP)
(Blood Sucker, www.bloodsucker-record.com)

JEUNESSE APATRIDE – "Black Block 'n' Roll" CD

Red anarchists. Not some offshoot new style, but by-the book general strike, bloody uprising revolutionary anarchy. From Montreal, this woman fronted, French-speaking band confuses me, I mean, the vocalist really does sound like a gruff Penelope Houston and the players actually have the intensity and skill and heart of the AVENGERS. And yet, we have Oi! Oi! Oi! choruses and societal downfall graphics and words. If you think punks and skins should unite and work together to create a world where we can work more (?), than buy this. It really sounds incredible, sending shivers down my spine. However, these people are putting politics as their main issue, so one cannot ignore it. Unless you are a revolutionary worker, I cannot see why a person would buy it. Fine. (JA)
(no address)

JOHN THE BAKER & THE MALNOURISHED – "Fire Marshall Law" CD

Up-the-fucking-ass-East-fuckin'-fuck-Bay-crust-thrash-hardcore!!! Lots of post GRIMPLE, post ECONOCHRIST sounds here. Members of NIGEL PEPPER COCK, DYSTOPIA and BRAINOIL are in this band, if that gives you any ideas. Oh, yes. The lyrics are unusual, anti real estate companies and pederast cops to bring up a couple. Throaty, scratchy vox rule over this digital disc. Actually super-surprising and terrific. Eat this, punk. (JA)
(Controlled By Plague, PO Box 22641, San Francisco, CA. 94122)

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT – "Fade to Black" CD

A reissue of this Arizona band from 1984. I don't remember these guys as they apparently broke up shortly after this LP's release. They sure sound a lot like SHATTERED FAITH or CATCH 22 or name that smaller SoCal band circa 1983. Decent enough with 7 live tracks tacked on from back in the day. (RL)
(Malt Soda, PO Box 7611, Chandler, AZ 85246)

KARST – "Vision of Insane Hope" CD

This one took a little while to grow on me. Being an enormous fan of DAMAD, I had high expectations for KARST's full-length debut, who also feature Victoria from DAMAD on vocals. There's a lot of good stuff on here that wasn't immediately present upon first listen. Less experimental than her previous project, INSTITUTE, KARST is a fairly logical extension of DAMAD- it's hard not to hear DAMAD in the riffs. A lot of songs are written in 3/8 which give the riffs a cyclical, whirling dervish churn, almost in a witches cavorting around the cauldron kind of way. Victoria does all kinds of wacky things with her vocals- from scary cackling to hushed whispers, but she's still at her best with her trademark monstrous low-end roar, which is in fine form I might add. Overall a pretty damn solid record—fans of DAMAD, KYLESA and the like won't be disappointed. (EL)
(Hater of God, PO Box 666, Troy, NY, 12181, www.haterofgod.com)

THE KNIGHTS OF THE NEW CRUSADE – "My God is Alive! Sorry About Yours! Songs in Praise of Our Lord God and in Condemnation of Sin" CD

Wow! This is something else. Obviously some jokers have taken a joke soooooo far that it's more scary than funny. This medieval quartet plays some mean garage punk, but the sheer quantity of references to God and sin overwhelm the music. Yes, a song or two is hilarious, but after four songs, even "Ain't No Monkeys in My Family Tree (Gen. 1, Gen. 2:7, John 1:3)" loses its humor. I think the jokes and references are sooo dense, the KNIGHTS would've been better off putting out a few EPs. Of course this "New Crusade" wouldn't go as far on vinyl, so these poor Knights must spread the word on CD. Luckily "'E' is for Evil (Nahum 1:10, Proverbs 23:19-21, Ephesians 5:17-18)" is a free download on their website, so prepare to simultaneously laugh and puke. (HM)
(Gabriel's Trumpet, www.crusadenow.com)

KNIVES – CD

Ok now, this is *rock*. The KNIVES must spend much time perfecting their amped=up

rock riffs and customizing their clothes, because these guys are also quite fashionable. They would be opening for SUPERSUCKERS *and* fighting the girls off with sticks afterward. (DP)
(www.theknives.net)

THE KODIAKS – "Watch My Soul" EP

One of my favorite singles labels does it again! The KODIAKS are sweaty Texans who scream, pound and shake their way from the garage to the barstool. Primitive and ass-shakin' in a swampy sort of way, but there's keg full 'o energy in this singer's snarl. This single didn't come with any candy, but it's still pretty sweet. Sorry, couldn't resist. (MC)
(Yakisakana, 51, Rue Renaudel, 76 100 Rouen FRANCE)

KONTATTO / BEYOND DESCRIPTION – split EP

KONTATTO are awesome! Totally raw, primitive Italian hardcore that unleashes a furious barrage of relentless thrash. My only complaint would be when they switch up the vocals to do that deep guteral grind bark sort of thing, stick with the screaming! It sounds a million times better! On the flipside we have Japan's BEYOND DESCRIPTION who churn out two more tracks of mid-paced crust that which honestly makes me go—"eh?!" I've liked their stuff before, but this doesn't quite grab me. Worth it for the KONTATTO side. (MT)
(Disastro Sonoro, c/o Alessandro Castano, C.P. 162 – 54033, Carrara (MS), ITALY)

KURT OLVARS REBELLER – "Pa Heder Och Samvete" LP

First off, numbered "337" this is a limited LP that, according to the back cover, came out in 1996. ...Of 500 or 1000, I dunno. I wouldn't bet on bumping into one of these up at your local record store anytime soon, here we go... KURT OLVARS REBELLER. Really, you can't get much more "Swedish" than this. A great mix of the fast, harsh DISCHARGE/MOTORHEAD sound that was popularized by ANTI-CIMEX, etc. in the 80s, with a distinctly Scandinavian style of mid-paced melodic punk, with vocal harmonies and bar room style sing-a-longs. Liner notes don't give me much info as to when this was recorded, but it sounds old and I know these guys go back to the 70s. Seems like a KBD collector scum kind of thing, so I'd say pick it up if you run into one, and if you're not into it you can probably make a few bucks on Ebay. (VH)
(Rosa Honung, Skivan Distribueras Av., 1000 dB, Tjarhovsgatan 54, S116 69 Stockholm, SWEDEN)

LAHDON AIKA – CD

This is really bad metallic thug-core. Insultingly simple plodding riffs, weak tempos, tough guy shouting vocals—no thanks. Really nothing redeeming here. I expected better from Finland. (EL)
(Northern Hardcore Massacre, Pellonojantie 2D 38, 05800 Hyvinkaa, FINLAND, nhmassacre.cjb.net)

LE SCRAWL – "Eager to Please" 10"

At long last the genius of Germany's long-running death metal lounge outfit LE SCRAWL is being brought to the masses courtesy of Life is Abuse and RSR. We had an old pre-"LE" 7" from them at the radio station I used to work for, and it was the go-to weirdest record you'd reach for when someone made the claim of having already heard everything worth hearing. Like a MR. BUNGLE for the grind set, LE SCRAWL mixes full on metal parts with ska, lounge, cabaret and surf interludes, and I know that sounds like it could be terrible, but they pull it off seamlessly. The songs on this—I think their first new material in a long while- are even better than before- tighter transitions, blazing guitar thrashing and catchier lounge bits. LE SCRAWL have transcended the novelty or joke tag that one might associate with such juxtaposition and instead deliver a captivating, unique and fully shit-kicking record. (EL)
(Life is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland CA, 94620, www.lifeisabuse.com, Regurgitated Semen, c/o Sandro Gessner, Strasse des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpollnitz, GERMANY)

THE LEWD – "Kill Yourself" EP

This limited edition of 500 revives a 1978 single by the LEWD – a regular in the old West Cost punk scene. It's rude mid-tempo punk produced with too much vocals, snot-nosed and riff-heavy. The hilariously tasteless "Trash Can Baby" may be the most memorable tune here – a song that defines the LEWD more than any other. Very cool flared colored vinyl, and very nicely packaged. The music's okay. (SS)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3/A, 43100 Parma, ITALY)

LICKGOLDENSKY – "Recess Is Now In Session" LP

Based on the artwork and packaging, I can't help but think of those awful 12" remix singles that GSL keeps putting out. Yeah, the 1/2 purple, 1/2 yellow colored vinyl actually makes me less interested, almost hesitant to put the needle down. And well, my assumptions weren't too far off the mark. It sounds like kids that were straight edge six months ago just finished off their first bag of cocaine. Pointless electronic drivel fills the gaps between sassy modern hardcore. These guys want to get chicks, but still playing "brutal hardcore".... Uh yeah. It's a train wreck. But somehow it worked for the Blood Brothers. (VH)
(Level Plane, PO Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906)

LIGHTS OUT – "Get Out" EP

SF's LIGHTS OUT blast through this their first EP, seven tracks of fairly traditional late 80s style sXe hardcore, with enough interesting twists and turns to keep it from sounding stale. Musically this is totally top notch with the energy levels through the fucking roof—what is a disappointment, however, is how the lyrics are just so mired in cliché after cliché. I had big hopes given Conner's more introspective and interesting lyrics in his prior band's the LAB RATS and SHARP KNIFE. I'm c'mon "...fucking poser (sic), I don't owe you shit..." please. Anyone else notice there's a fucking war going on? Corporation's are moving more and more to dominate every aspect of our lives and our rights are

being more and more stripped away? Up the ante boys! You've got a brain so use it! Flex your head—and other clichés! Overall a good record that certainly stands out from the pack, I just want a little more, you know? (MT)
(Youngblood, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522, www.youngblod-records.com)

THE LOCOMOTIONS – "She's Gotta Go" EP
Picking up, in a much less polished way, where their debut LP on Alien Snatch left off, Martin Savage and Co, continue to do what they do best; rock the fuck out. Fans of the DEVIL DOGS and TEENGENERATE should do themselves a favor and pick up on this band. (BM)
(Yakisakana, 51, rue Renaudel – 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE, www.yakisakanarecords.com)

LOCOMOTIONS - CD
Abusive, tinny cacophony. I listened to it while (*insert domestic task*) and the hours simply flew by. The LOCOMOTIONS bridge the generation gap between GIZMOS frat-punk and modern-day DOWN SYNDROME—underfed and hopped-up on electricity, they've got a sound that I hear plenty of—*but* they also bring a kinda underfed desperation that pushes 'em over the edge into Memorable. Catchy tunes. Punk without the Mohawks. Lyric-wise they're not much more complicated than "You Got Your Headlights On" or "Baby, you look so fine, wanna make you mine," etc. It ain't poetry but if I need poetry I'll turn to Merle Haggard. (JH)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078, www.dead-beat-records.com)

ROY LONEY & THE LONGSHOTS – "Drunkard in the Think Tank" CD
Wherein we find ROY LONEY of FLAMIN' GROOVIES fame in fine form, showing his hard rock, pop, ballad, etc. sides until you think he's a dodecahedron (and I've never played D&D!). I know plenty of Japanese bands who make a pilgrimage to Jack's Record Cellar every time they come to SF will be mightily pleased with this (except for a bit of cheesy keyboard popping into "Grapey Wine"). (DD)
(Career, 424 North Fifth Ave., Bozeman, Montana, 59715, www.CareerRecords.com)

LOOSE CHANGE – "Arcade" EP
I've given this band many a good review over the years. But this record is kind of vague in it's purpose. Is it a new record or is it old stuff with Jade of AFI fame. Maybe its old stuff by the new lineup as the songs were written by/with Jade and he is mentioned on background vocals. Didn't Jade leave LOOSE CHANGE like five years ago anyway. This band is good enough locally to keep moving forward. A decent EP. (RL)
(Phantom Sound Records, PO Box 991053, Redding, CA 96099)

LOST SOUNDS – "Demos & Outtakes Volume Two" 3 x EP Box Set
And the winner for the most outlandishly lavish, semi-worthless yet totally essential release of 2004 is...this box set. Followers of this band will recognize nearly all of the material featured on these three candy-colored singles, as this originally appeared as a self-released CD-R and then a legit CD release on On/On Switch. Pay that no mind: there is *one* unreleased track, thus making this entire vinyl offering all the more...bigger. Three singles, a booklet, a poster, a picture, a pin, two stickers, one piece of candy and one high price tag. Oh yeah...the music? One of the top five bands currently in existence in rare (500 sets only) and raw form. If you thought the albums were too polished, wait until you hear this. Recommended for fans. That means everyone. (MC)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3/A, 43100 Parma, ITALY)

MAINSTRIKE – Commitment CD
This CD compiles their *Times Still Here* 7", their most recent self titled 7", and three additional bonus tracks. I always liked MAINSTRIKE. Matter of fact, I enjoyed their older stuff more than I enjoyed SPORTSWEAR (who were better received in the States for whatever reason). I was especially a fan of their older stuff (especially the *Times Still Here* 7"). The last stuff they did was much more on the modern and melodic side of things. Still, all the tracks on here are pretty solid. If you like true-to-form straight edge hardcore, then this is definitely worth picking up. (CC)
(Crucial Response, Kaiserfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, GERMANY)

MANGANZOIDES – "Radio Komodo" CD
From...Peru. A nation of environmental extremes, and one of the cradles of early Mesoamerican rock 'n' roll (Dr. Dante sez at least, and his word is worth its weight in golden idols). The MANGANZOIDES are Pleistocene spooky 60s/surf-influenced rock 'n' roll that connects instant—led by vintage keyboard, riffs kinda slick without sacrificing the *oomph* that this kinda stuff desperately needs to make its case. The singer wastes no time trying to hit the high notes—in Spanish, natch, though I can twig the meaning behind "Muerto en Vida," "El Espectro," and "Amor Reptil." A rare achievement, considering how many dabble with this formula with middling results. Fun and fun again. (JH)
(No Fun, PO Box 8154, Ann Arbor, MI 48107, www.nofunrecords.com)

MANIKINS – LP
Swedish garage rock with splinters. Matching nautical tops, Russell Quan haircuts, and lots of surface noise on the vinyl skipping over all the jaggedy 60s-style shaking and baking. Rough and ready and free from the curse of fey. I give 'em high marks, they move me, and I don't feel like intellectualizing them any further than I have already—"He Spat on Me" kicks arse. (JH)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3A, 43100 Parma, ITALY, www.rockinbones.it)

MARVEL- "Bedlam at the Embassy" EP
Solid 1970s rock ala APRIL WINE meets THIN LIZZY with a speckle of JETHRO TULL, a gob of DRUNK HORSE and a smattering of STEPPENWOLF. These guys sound flawless and professional. Quite a spectacular performance and a solid rock EP... hence MARVEL. (HM)
(Black Juju, http://come.to/blackjuju)

THE MARVELS – "Cheat to Win" CD
Pretty good rockin' melodic punk. They sound rather eclectic for being essentially a pop-punk band, I hear dabs of everything from MUDER CITY DEVILS to CRIMPSHRINE, and one song even sounds kinda like NOFX. It's well played and cool enough, though I don't think that these guys are going to be as big as something leads me to think that they might think they are going to be... Hmmm. (AD)
(Abbey Lounge, 3 Beacon St., Somerville, MA 02143)

MARY CELESTE – "Our Guernica" CD
Driving, DC-style post punk (as opposed to the Brooklyn flavor currently burning up the discos and catwalks)... To me, this band sounds like a more straight-ahead (and more consistent) BLACK EYES. There's five songs on here and they are all good. The lyrics are a little bit obtuse, but that's par for the course with this stuff I suppose. Check this out. (AM)
($6 ppd: Hope, PO Box 71154, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, www.hoperecords.com)

MORNING SHAKES – "XXX-Plode with the Sounds of Sex, Booze, and Sin!" LP
It's a tough title to live up to (I'd have performance anxiety) though the SHAKES do themselves proud like a band of Joe Sixpacks should. *XXX-Plode with the Sounds of Etc.* is a collection of 45 and LP tracks aimed at the casual consumer who might not have caught

them on their initial release (guilty), and like most singles comps, you're likely to find something that pleases you. What you got is '94-style garage rock of the Rip Off records variety, a little lighter on the lip gloss and a little heavier pound-for-pound. You got a Billy Childish tune ("Devious Means"), a Mick Collins number ("Thunderbird ESQ") and a lotta Pabst-fuel 60-meets-90s rock 'n' roll that floored me back then but sounds a little tame and cautious by 21st Century standards. One for the fan club. (JH)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3A, 43100 Parma, ITALY, www.rockinbones.it)

MORONICS – "Style Your Hair the Way the Moronics Like It!" LP

Weird that these guys couldn't find a label to put this out when they walked the earth at the turn of the millennium, because it is flat out great garage punk, from Europe no less. These guys did get one 7" out, which is but a teaser for this furious fur ball of a record, which suffers only from muddy mastering (?) or something, because the tunes under the murk are sonic. Great cover of "Grind Her Up." Limited to 300, and jeez, legit Peter Bagge cover art. (RW)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3/A, 43100 Parma, ITALY)

M.O.T.O – " Kill MOTO" LP

Try Pigeon holing this Windy city patrons, a bit off ARMITAGE SHANKS, a dose off WARSAW, some off that old time Chicago sound i.e. the EFFIGIES and what not, Christ I can even hear bits of Boston's the FREEZE.I know these big city cats think they sound nothing like the above mentioned but these boys ain't making things easy. Fuck comparisons, try straight up melodic anthem driven punk rock, with enough edge and roughness to have me diving back into my old NAKED RAYGUN and BHOPAL STIFFS records. Apart from an unhealthy helping of throw away piss takes, this is as solid as punk rock gets, even their version of the usually untouchable "Dance To The Radio" by JOY DVISION stinks off quality. (SD)
(Criminal IQ, PO Box 578912, Chicago, IL 60657.www.motorock.com)

MOUSEROCKET – LP

I wouldn't paint their name across the back of my leather jacket (that spot's reserved for that Special Band I Haven't Met Yet), but that doesn't mean that I don't like MOUSEROCKET. The band's got a deceptively simple, clean-lined rock sound that has a kinda retro 1990s quality to it—to my mind, at least. Some might call 'em quirky pop, female-fronted sounds that edges up against commercial radio sounds like VERUCA SALT or something…maybe it's the presence of LOST SOUND Alicja Trout, who handles much of the heavy lifting. They've got a kinda cool guitar sound, though, the tunes keep you guessing, and there's a sense of autistic street-preacher strangeness wrapped around the edges and wedged between the tracks. "My Boyfriend's a Killer" stands as proof of this…and their cover of LOVE's "Alone Again Or" shows their "emotional range." Surprising and intriguing, you'd call its. (JH)
(Empty, PO Box 12301, Portland, OR 97212, www.emptyrecords.com)

MY PRECIOUS – "Spitting Eyes" CD

MY PRECIOUS who are from Singapore, play some metallic screamo that flows between mid-tempo and fast parts. Harshly screamed female vocals take the lead, with some occasionally high-pitched singing thrown in. (On some of the songs there are two female vocalists) There is a little variety here with some fast hardcore parts which intrigued me, but overall it came across as pretty standard for the genre. (RC)
(Jahil, c/o Najjib, Blk 32, Marine Cresent, #10-119, SINGAPORE 440032)

NK6 – "No Back No" EP

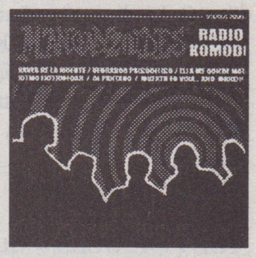
Fucking amazing! If Alzheimer's didn't kill Reagan, this record would have. Think back to El Salvador… Granada… NK6 are *that* vicious and savage. It sounds exactly like a GAUZE record that came out in the 90s (i.e. the Prank single). I didn't think it was possible for NK6 to top their *Keep On Keeping On* LP, but these five songs are so relentlessly fast and so completely devastating, they do! I really don't understand the Bay Area Japanese/European hardcore hype machine at all, and I really don't care to, but I don't think these guys seemed to make the cool list… So, for five seconds take a break from adding studs to your jacket, forget everything you heard on the Internet and at Gilman St. basketball games, and listen to this. It'll kick your ass harder than anything you've bought in the last six months has. (VH)
(Blood Sucker, 1-16-18-403, Kusunoki-Chou, Nishi-Ku, Hiroshima-City, JAPAN, 733-0002, www.blood-sucker-records.com)

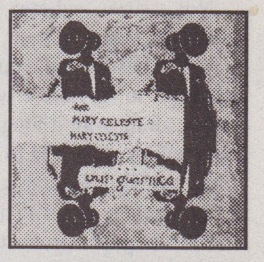
NEVER ENOUGH – "Our Will is Done" EP

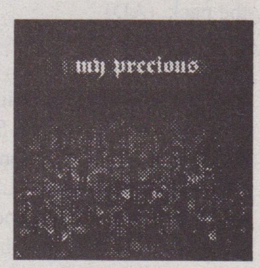
I have to admit, I thought this was going to sound completely different based on the cover art. I was expecting more of an old 80s Dischord or Touch and Go sound. Or maybe even an old Dutch hardcore sound. Instead, you get six songs of fast modern hardcore with raspy barked vocals along the lines of AMERICAN NIGHTMARE. The upside down crucifix on the cover leads me to believe that this band probably won't be playing with COMEBACK KID anytime soon. Says here inside the lyric sheet "NEVER ENOUGH support the atheist lifestyle". You don't say? Other lyrics deal with growing out of the scene, two-faced friends, and other classic 'core topics. Not bad, but the artwork definitely leaves something to be desired (especially for this genre). (CC)
(Vendetta, Gleimstr. 17, 10437 Berlin, GERMANY, www.vendettarecords.de)

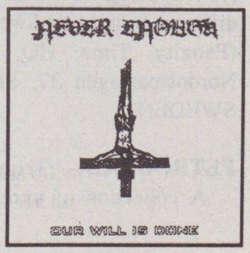
NEW CRIME ICONS – "Milked Like Cows" EP

Here's some DIY punk coming out of Kalamazoo, Michigan where allegedly, they're the only DIY punk band around. They deliver some speedy political hardcore with lyrics that bring up issues about the plight of the Palestinians, war in Iraq, and the fucked up American Dream. A mix of the PIST and the DEFIANCE come to mind with a bit of screeching added in for good measure. On nice clear vinyl. (SR)
($3 ppd; Don't Fuck Around, 7649 South Indian Lake Dr., Vicksburg, MI 49097)









NIFTERS – "Cognitive Eclipse" CD

This is a short five song CDEP of straightforward dirty rocknroll. These Swedish rockers are super heavy on the guitars with distorted vocals at times. Seems a bit influenced by Detroit rockers the STOOGES. Not Bad. (SR)

(Black JuJu, blackjuju101@hotmail.com)

NITROMINDS – "Ao Vivo" CD

A live recording of this long-running Brazilian band. From the looks of the photos, they are pretty huge down there, and from the sound of the album, there's a good reason for that. They deal in anthemic, tuneful melodic punk. The recording quality and the performance are top notch, and if you're a fan, this is probably worth picking up. If you're new to NITROMINDS, you might want to start with a studio recording. (AM)

(Thirteen, thirteenrecords.cjb.net)

PAUSE – "Lovenom" EP

Ultra dark and super heavy Finnish hardcore intensity from this Tampere quintet, offering four songs of thick, burly, sweeping distortion riffs from three (!) guitars and a bass, and a gnarled attitude towards all things "love". I believe the drummer is from RIISTETYT. Fans of UNKIND, WOLFBRIGADE, ARTIMUS PYLE, etc. This will be on a heavy rotation on my turntable. (WM)

(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, FINLAND, www.kolumbus.fi/fight)

THE PEACOCKS – "It's Time For..." CD

Not sure where these guys are from...Germany? Czech Republic? Anyway they play neat melodic punk with a rockabilly influence to it. Funny lyrics and some nice hooks, along with a tough (*tough* meaning—like the kids who used to hang around outside your grandparents high school wearing leather jackets and smoking cigarettes) sound and Sonic Iguana production put this ahead of the pack. (AD)

(www.thepeacocks.ch)

PENALTY TIME – "Rich Kids" EP

These five boys from Sweden play a slow, grinding punk very reminiscent of not-thrash POISON IDEA and LEATHERFACE. It never slows to boring, and neither does it get to fast for incomprehensibility. Danceable and slow nodding of the head-able. Good stuff, different from usual Swede-core. (JA)

(Penalty Time HQ, c/o M.Adlerborn, Nordostpassagen 37, SE-413 11 Goteborg, SWEDEN)

PETROGRAD – "Trigger Happy" CD

A collection of unreleased, EP and split tracks from this Euro band, apparently posthumus. Tuneful emo punk with a good guy/gal vocal mix. Along the ways of J CHURCH and DISCOUNT. Good Stuff. (RL)

(Hungry Ghost Records, PO Box 620241, Middleton, WI, 53562, www.petrograd.lu)

PHOENIX FOUNDATION – "We Need To Make Some Changes" CD

Finland's PHOENIX FOUNDATION get their obligatory release on Japan's SNUFFY SMILE label, a six-song three-incher. If you're not already familiar with them, they play the style of melodic, HÜSKER DÜ / LEATHERFACE influenced stuff that's all the rage these days (eg, MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, NO CHOICE, etc) but sticking my neck out, I'd say they are probably the best of the bunch. If you can get your hands on this, you won't be disappointed. (AM)

(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)

THE PINE / LA QUIETE – split EP

The PINE are from Bakersfield, CA and have one long song on here that sounds like a rawer SHUDDER TO THINK. LA QUIETE are from Italy and have a mid-90s emo sound. The packaging of the release is also a throwback to that period and style, with lots of handwriting and different sized cardboard inserts etc. On the whole it's a pretty neat release and it's a sign of some interesting life down there in the Central Valley area.

($4 ppd: Broken Hearts Club, 1412 17th St #C, Bakersfield, CA 93301, bhc@munozgym.com)

PIRX THE PILOT – "Famous in 47 States" CD

The New Disorder label has put out a bunch of great records in the last five or so years, good anthemic punk with real cred. This new disc by PIRX THE PILOT is not my cuppa, as the dry vocals and spare songs just don't make me want to do…anything. I blame computers, as this record would probably sound great to me on a wax cylinder. That's how fucked up I am, waaah… (RW)

(New Disorder, 115 Bartlett St., San Francisco, CA 94110)

PRACTICE – "More Practice" EP

Great name lads must have taken at least two cases of beer and a half bag of fine leave to conjure up that one. Luckily shit name but whatta ya know, some fine tunage on this three player. Christ this Japanese folks don't half know how to play homage to some off the finer British punk acts, RUDIE, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, the JAM and early SNUFF to name a few. Even traces off the greatness off early JAWBREAKER come shining threw. Poppy without being sugary, which suits me just fine. (SD)

(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo, 155-0333, JAPAN)

PROOF OF EXISTENCE – "Scriptural Disaster" LP

Holy crap! This is one of the heaviest fucking records put out in the last ten years! This has the maniacal guitars and bleeding vocals you might associate with DISFEAR. The Japanese wall of guitar noise assault is compounded by one of the most unrelenting vocal attacks witnessed in impolite company. As a whole, the record is damn near suffocating – there is never a chance to come up for air! PROOF OF EXISTENCE bludgeons you with "The Cries of War," "Killed Heart," "Severe Choice," "Religious Terror" and eight more equally painful blows. This release shows no quarter—you are past the point of no return—surrender to PROOF OF EXISTENCE. (BR)

(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092-200 42 Malmo, SWEDEN, www.putridfilth.com)

PROTEX – "All We Wanna Do Is Rock 'n' Roll" LP

…super fucking fantastic re-issue record of old singles and rarities by late 70s early 80s Irish pop group PROTEX!!!! This whole record is incredible!!!!! Makes me want to suck a twat!!! This has gotta be a bootleg 'cause there's no label name or info of any sort…just a "no-frills" jacket!!! Regardless, this kind of cheese ball pop scrambles my DNA and makes my sperm count run high…just taste it if you don't believe me!!!!!(SW)

(Bootleg City, Yo Mama)

RADIO ONE / DIE HUNNS – split 45

Apparently DIE HUNNS features the woman from NASHVILLE PUSSY (which I guess means she must not like Southern flavored hard rock anymore.) and of-course the old geezer is Duane "oh fuck he's going to fall off the stage" Peters, who has now pushed the envelope so far he's back to where he stared having completed a circuit of the globe…Anyway – enough of my bitching, their track on this really good, her voice compliments his nicely while the Long Beach '77 wall-of-noise guitars goes off in the background. RADIO ONE offer up another nugget of 1977 guerilla-chic three-chord punk. Nice stuff all round. (AD)

(Disaster)

THE ED RANDOM BAND – "Boxer" CD

Anthemic Kraut band, that tattooed folks in wifebeaters would adore, I'm sure. Along with the slicked back hair, they play an upright bass (well, at least they have one in

the picture, you can't tell on the CD) and come out brawling with a healthy mix of COCKNEY REJECTS and SOCIAL DISTORTION. It is actually really good. Both COCKNEY REJECTS and SOCIAL DISTORTION are just fine by me, thank you very much. (RK)
(Wolverine, www.wolverine-records.de)

RAZORS – "1977" EP

Okay, RAZORS were an old German band from the late 70s (and now they're just an old German band...) Very snotty, catchy and awash with nostalgia this is pretty good (...for a bunch of old fuckers.) (AD)
(Teenage Rebel, Wallstr. 21, 40213 Düsseldorf, GERMANY)

REATARDS – "Live" LP

Bootleg quality, tin bathtub being whacked with hammer, bootleg info, basically none and ye ol' faithful bootleg packaging, cut and paste style. Is this a must, can't see a damn reason why it should be unless you just gotta have it all. Get the LP, buy the singles pop open a chilled bottle off Colt 45 and enjoy the racket the way it's suppose to be. (SD)
(Goner)

RIGHTEOUS JAMS - "Boston Straight Edge" EP

Just in case you don't read my column on straight edge hardcore (gasp!), the demo cassette version of this record made my top ten for 2003. For anyone that missed out on getting this the first time around when it came out on Lockin' Out Records, now is your time to see what all the hype is about. This has all the same recordings from the demo, including their nod to the BAD BRAINS with their track titled "Righteous Dub". For me personally, their vocalist is what sets RIGHTEOUS JAMS above and beyond the other bands on the Lockin' Out roster. Definitely worth the import price tag. (CC)
(Anger Management, Nijvelsebaan 161, 3060 Korbeek-Dijle, BELGIUM, www.am-records.com)

RUM RUNNER – "Association" CD

I guess its de rigueur for "street-punk" bands these days, to add a dash of 'authentic' folk music to their mix, especially if its Irish sounding. RUM RUMMER go one better, doing two SHANE MCGOWAN songs. Suitably maudlin gritty vocals, not to mention the occasional banjo will, I'm sure, make this a hit with folks enamored with the current DROPKICK MURPHYS and SWINGIN UTTERS sound. Or is that AGAINST ME!? (RK)
(Longshot, www.longshotmusic.com)

SCAT RAG BOOSTERS – "Charlie's Dirt Road" EP

Bloozy swagger an' drool. The guitars go twang-twang and the drums go bap-bap, but the songs are rather flat-flat. Need more, need more, but decent garage energy throughout. (RW)
(Goodbye Boozy, Via Villa Pompetti, 147-64020, S. Nicolo, ITALY)

SECRET 7 / JAHILIA – split EP

Both bands here are from Singapore and assault your eardrums with an onslaught of fast thrashing punk. The JAHILIA side sounded a little thin and sloppy, but the SECRET 7 side floored me from the first chord. I seem to remember them having an EP on 625, and I am sure this is in the same vein as that. They are fast and furious with catchy hooks and snarling vocals. If they aren't beating you down with blast beats, they thrown in this edge of youth crew just to reel you in. Fucking awesome! (RC)
($6 ppd; c/o Muhammad Fairuz Bin Taswadi, Blk 204, Marsiling Drive, #07-208, SINGAPORE 730204, www.thrashsteadysyndicate.cjb.net)

SEGER LIBERATION ARMY – "2+2=? / East Side Story"

...fuckin' 'eh, another tribute to BOB by the other SLA... the Detroit band!! Looks like a second in their series of way old BOB SEGER tunes... when he was apart of the SYSTEM and the LAST HEARD, all covered with grace by Mr. Jim Diamond and friends!!!! Very smooth vocal work by Tom Potter (ex-BANTAM ROOSTER, ex-homosexual lover of Mr. Eddy Budds, Jr.)...and one dirty sweet production job as well!!!!! If you never got to taste the powerful cock and huge, wet and swollen balls of BOBBY-BOY SEGER back when your mother was balling him, here's something to breast-feed your children with... (SW)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

THE SETUP – "Nine Kinds of Pain" EP

This is the debut release for Belgium's the SETUP. They crank out four songs of up-tempo hardcore, with an overriding edge of metal. Full production and snarling vocals complete the package. A solid release for fans of bands like SUICIDE FILE. (RC)
(AM, Nijvelsebaan 161, 3060 Korbeek-dijle, BELGIUM)

SHARK SOUP – CD

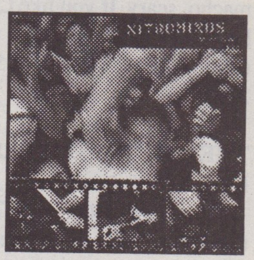
Self-produced, self-released seven track effort. If this was on vinyl, it would've been a mini-LP back in the day. Not quite sure what the relevant term is for a CD, but that's what it is. Real professional sounding German three-piece, which play speedy pop punk with a slight rockabilly tinge. Think of the REZILLOS colliding with the smooth hooks and vocals of BAD RELIGION. And it pretty much works. (RK)
(Shark Pool, www.shark-soup.com)

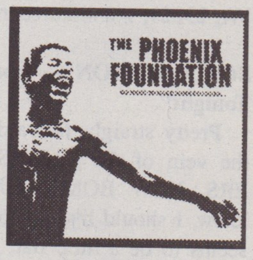
SICK FITS – "Mirror Creeps" EP

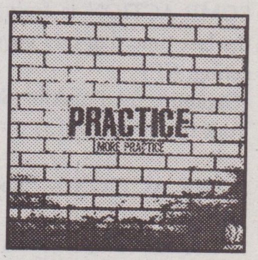
The SICK FITS have a 70s Max's Kansas City or CBGB sound kind of like the HEARTBREAKERS, only faster and not on heroin. A must have. (DP)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

SKARP – "Bury Your Dead" CD

This is blazing fast crust/grind from Seattle, WA. They remind me a lot of DISRUPT, except they have a little more metal in their style. SKARP have a female vocalist. This CD tore my ears apart and I loved it except those brief moments of ska! Not sure about that,







but nevertheless the songs were short and to the point, just like this review. Get it now! (RC)
($8 ppd; Inimical, 1426 Harvard Ave #103, Seattle, WA 98122)

SLUMLORDS – LP

"The Baltimore skinheads are coming for you." Typical new style hardcore. Boring, macho, scary. If you like Coors and are a skinhead love puppy, get this. (JA)
(Slumlords, PO Box 12058, Baltimore, MD. 21281)

THE SMUT PEDDLERS – "Coming Out" LP

I remember the SMUT PEDDLERS putting out a single that I liked not too long back. I think it was on Hostage Records. Wow, it says on the sleeve that this is their fifth full-length release. In that same blurb, they mention that the CIRCLE JERKS also put out a fifth full-length. That's funny because these guys remind me to some degree of the CIRCLE JERKS. They've got that same, old skewl hardcore sound. And they've got a great motorcycle song, so there. (KK)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St., #303, Richmond, VA, 23221, www.tkorecords.com)

SOME ACTION – "Some Action / Hurt Tonight"

Pretty straight forward rocknroll punk in the vein of the SAINTS, HEARTBREAKERS, NEW BOMB TURKS, etc. I don't know, I should like it more then I do, it just seems to be a little flat. Maybe it's because SOME ACTION is from NYC and when is the last time that city gave us anything interesting. (JF)
(Gigantic, 59 Franklin St., Suite 403, New York City, NY 10013)

SOME ACTION – "Some Action / Hurt Tonight"

I reviewed this band's CDEP few months back and was totally floored. It was absolutely brilliant. The songs were catchy and snotty and sounded like a band that grew up listening to the DAMNED, DEAD BOYS, DOLLS and SAINTS. Guitar heavy but not over powering, spastic vocals that boarder on over the top but never cross the line into tasteless and comical (BLACK HALOS should take some notes). Even the goddamn packaging was brilliant (you have to see it to fully appreciate it). My only complaint was that it wasn't on vinyl. Man, how could it would have been to get those tunes on some wax, drop the needle and just rock the fuck out. This EP- no, this single, from their EP collects two of those tunes on pink swirl wax and I can't be any happier. I am totally at ease with the world right now. All my hostilities towards crappy music and pontsy people are washed away. I am playing along on my big red Rickenbacker and kicking over any furniture that is in the way of my rocking out. Take that sofa. Take that coffee table. This band makes me want to break stuff and smoke cigarettes, then start a band just so I can play a show with them. Now if they could only get an album out… (BM)
(Gigantic, 59 Franklin St, Suite 403 New York, NY 10013, www.someaction.com)

STARVIN HUNGRY – "Damnesty" CD

This is like GLENN DANZIG meets some Detroit-style 70s retro rock guys and they get together and form a band just to annoy me. Well, they succeeded. (DP)
(Grenadine, PO Box 42050, Montreal, QC CANADA, H2W 2T3, www.grenadinerecords.com)

STRAIGHT TO HELL – "We Will Bury You" LP

I kind of overlooked these guys when I first heard their split w/ BALANCE OF TERROR, simply because the BALANCE OF TERROR side was so great I never felt the need to flip the record. But Rhode Island's STRAIGHT TO HELL proves they can hold their own as they blast out twelve-ninety mile an hour tracks of anger and violence. Ugly, raw, uncompromising hardcore from members of ULCER and DROPDEAD. (VH)
(DeadAlive, PO Box 42593, Philadelphia, PA 19101, www.deadaliverecords.com)

STREBERS – "Öga for Öga" 12"

This re-release gives fans of classic Swedish punk (and let's be honest, we're all fans) another chance to enjoy a minor classic. STREBERS are members of the ASTA KASK style, offering melodic mid-tempo tunes, gruff vocals, and interesting guitar work. "Vinder Blaser Harda," with its Russian-style sing-a-long chorus, cannot be resisted; but all of the tunes are guaranteed to grow on you. Strongly recommended. (SS)
(Chicken Brain, Box 3216, 125 03 Alvsjo, SWEDEN)

STRIP MUSIC – "Desperation" CD EP

The press sheet says this Swedish band wanted to be SPACEMAN 3 in the beginning. But what they have here is a CD single of an anthem that JESUS AND MARY CHAIN should have written in heir day. Three or so notes, wall of guitar, drone but melodic keyboards and a glam-esque singer. A great 2 songer for fans of the UK noise pop. (RL)
(Playground Music, www.playgroundmusic.com)

STRYCHNINE – "Oakland Stadtmusikanten—Live in Bremen Germany" LP

This is STRYCHNINE at their best...live at the B.O.B. festival in Germany. They've captured an excellent live performance/recording full of energy, buzzing guitars and Jimi's big mouth. They deliver twenty tunes including my faves: "Gotta Git Drunk," "Hate Finger," "Shit or Git", "Goin' Nowhere," and "Dead Rats and Oakland Dogs." Solid record. (HM)
(Depth Charge, 1001 Page St. #1, San Francisco, CA 94117)

SUNDAY DRUNKS – "On the Prowl" CD

I've been a Sunday drunk on more than one occasion—for these guys it's a lifetime calling. The SUNDAY DRUNKS are preoccupied with loose drinks and bad women, it seems, and back it up with a sorta NEW YORK DOLLS-y blues-ish 4/4 beat rock 'n' roll that has a Boy Next Door on Unemployment quality to it…I'd hesitate to call 'em an out-and-out punk rock group. There's more of a hammered REAL KIDS influence here, minus the sensitive, thoughtful weepy mournful aspects. The singer sounds like the GUN CLUB's late Jeffrey Lee Pierce during unguarded moments, but any resemblance is probably only coincidental. (JH)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078, www.dead-beat-records.com)

SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS – "Kängnäve" LP

Second full length from these Stockholm, Sweden lovers of DISCHARGE and all things fast, burly, and sore throated. Blazing guitars, hoarse vocals, a tempo suited perfectly for the pit (that's circle not mosh, bubba), lyrics in both English and in their native Swedish, a sense of humor, and most importantly, a simple straightforward rocking drive (check their riff on MOTÖRHEAD). Melodic without being poppy, fast without blurring, this is hardcore at its best and thusly is the official "No-Brainer of the Month" in my book. And while we're here let me just name-check SVART SNO and WOLFBRIGADE. Get this or die! (WM)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

SWEET COBRA – "Praise" CD

I can't do any better than the press sheet that came with this disc. "they (two guys in band) both loved the resurge of the angry 70s inspired groove rock but were near experts at playing in heavier hardcore bands. It was time to start something different that merged the sounds of their common influences without sounding overly experimental." I shit you not it says that. What they don't mention in the

press kit is this is a terrible heard it a million times before bore. Classic rock riffs with hardcore breakdowns and abrasive vocals. Ugh. Members of SUICIDE NOTE, SUICIDE FILE, STABBED BY WORDS, (I'm noticing a trend here) KILLING TREE, and KILLER, if that means anything to ya. (RR)
(www.seventhrule.com)

TECHNOCRACY – "Price of Killing Machine" LP
Ah yes, it was only a matter of time before a band named themselves after a CORROSION OF CONFORMITY record. Of course it is the title of the one we do not have in the collection, probably due to it being so metal. With that said, you can pretty much count on what this band is going to sound like. Highflying riffs, snarling vocals and a healthy mix of slow chunky breakdowns. I wish it had a slightly grittier feel to the production, but it still sounds great. They don't sound exactly like mid-era CORROSION OF CONFORMITY, but they wear their influences pretty well. As a side note, it should be mentioned that this band is from Japan and contains folks from NO SIDE. Truly awesome! (RC)
(Evilfly, 3-2-26, Tsukuda, Nishiyodogawa-Ku, Osaka-City, 555-0001, JAPAN)

TEEN HEAT – "Everybody Move" LP
This is volume two in Rockin' Bones *Demos Archive* series, which I believed kicked off with the STATICS or something. The demo quality only adds to the trashy charm of this release, immediately reminiscent of the "Budget Rock" craze. That's about as "garage" as it gets though, as Teen Heat seems to be channeling bands like TEENGENERATE or the DEVIL DOGS with this release. The singer's liners hint at stuffed trouser confidence, and I'm nearly convinced. If you miss Rip Off releases sounding like crud, this is all you. (MC)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3A, 43100 Parma, Italy, www.rockinbones.it)

TERMINAL YOUTH – "Shit Fit!" EP
Massachusetts blazing thrash/power-violence assault. Fast and thrashed, perfectly suited for circle pits and crazed stage-diving action. Brings to mind a slightly slower HELLNATION. With ex-members of the awesome, and sorely missed, BOB BARKER YOUTH (R.I.P.). This is music that just screams "GO!" Pressing is 330 copies, so get 'em while they're young. (WM)
(Rich White Kids, 205 Cabot St. #3, Beverly, MA 01915)

THIS TIME AROUND – "Whats In Your Heart" EP
The band hails from London and cranks out some fast posi-core with a lot of melody. Plus they remind me of CHAMPION from Seattle. Not a bad effort for their debut release. (RC)
(Sell Our Soul, PO Box 9187, 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN; selloursouls.com)

THUMBS UP – "Destroy" EP"
What we have here is a 7" that is straight up good hardcore, not the youth crew shit, not the metalcore shit, not the D-beat shit, not the I "got" NEUROSIS shit, but straight ahead classic hardcore. Now while I can back this thing really musically, lyrically it is a little confused. While there is nothing wrong initially about their lyrics, it is just funny to be singing a song about how you are sick of the same old slogans and stuff and then sing about it. Sorry guys, but songs about fashion hipsters, being betrayed by friends and being persecuted for speaking your mind is not new. Still this record is good stuff. (JF)
(MooCow, 38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02478)

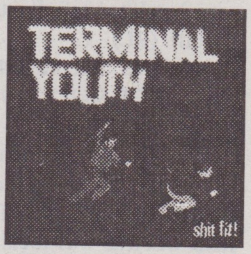
THUNDERTRAIN – "Teenage Suicide" LP
…mid-70s Boston cock 'n' roll bar band with asses open good and wide for the NEW YORK DOLLS and SLADE…pretty good stuff, especially if you like the taste of pink cum!!! However, I much prefer the sound of Boston's other bar band…WILLIE "LOCO" ALEXANDER & THE BOOM BOOM BAND…I'd let Willie shit in my mouth any old day of the week!!!! Old Boston rock *rules*!!!! (SW)
(Rockin' Bones, Borgo Palmia 3A, 43100 Parma, Italy, www.rockinbones.it)

TIJUANA BIBLES – "Fists of Fury" CD
This is an odd mixture of rock 'n' roll, surf, and 60s garage with a big horn section and a Moog and Theremin. Somehow it all works. The best part, tho, is the packaging, a life-sized silk-screened head of a lady Mexican Wrestler. (DP)
(no address)

TILL DEATH – "Hessian Session" EP
As I read the insert that said that this EP showcases the versatility of the band and "their love for all things IRON MAIDEN, coupled with a healthy dose of youth crew fury", I thought that they might be onto something good. Unfortunately, they don't sound like either one of those things. Instead, this is straight-up metalcore that is generic and uninspiring. Plus they butcher a cover of "Hard Times" by the CRO MAGS. Ooooffff! (RC)
(Phantom Sound, PO Box 991053, Redding, CA 96099; phantomsound.com)

TOUCH DOWN – "Reach for the Top" EP
A reissue of this Washington DC band's demo and a few live songs from the club the Anthrax. Never heard of them? Well they were a straightedge band from 1988 that remind me of UNIT PRIDE. Musically there is nothing too crazy to note, but the sXe kids will eat this up based on the nostalgia and limited color vinyl factors alone. (RC)
(Malfunction, www.malfunctionrecords.com)

TRAITORS – "Bring Me the Head of Matt Skiba" EP
I thought the TRAITORS disbanded a while ago... I guess not. This Chicago band seems to have a revolving cast with Marc Ruvalo from NO EMPATHY being the constant. Anyway, side one is a "ha-ha" joke song about the singer of the Warp Tour band ALKALINE TRIO (who played drums for this band at one point)… and it basically it sucks. The lyrics are funny, and I'll give it



to 'em that "drinking Old Style out of skulls" is funny, but musically this song is the equivalent of "blah blah blah yawn yawn yawn." But wait! Hold the phone, side B fucking rules, two pure angst driven punk rock tunes with hardcore-edge that clock in at under a minute! Like MINOR THREAT on ephedrine. Wow, this record is confusing—half suck and half good. (AS)
(Johanns Face, PO Box 479164, Chicago, IL. 60647, www.johannsface.com)

TRANSLATORS / FELDMANS – split EP
The TRANSLATORS side started out lo-fi and a little garagey, but then became a little arty and emo for my taste. The FELDMANS side was just a little less annoying. It started off kinda fast sloppy hardcore, then slowed down to Secret Center-style pop, then to something like FLIPPER but with belchy vocals. All in all, quite a schizophrenic release. (DP)
(42 Central Avenue, Redwood City, CA 94601)

TRIGGERS – "Bad Dream" EP
The TRIGGERS never disappoint. In addition to being one of the rockingest bands to come out of PORTLAND, they put on a great live show. If you like female vocals ala DEADLY WEAPONS and some kick-ass punk rock, the TRIGGERS are for you. (DP)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

TROPHY WIFE – "Stuck" EP
Basic twin guitar punk with a MISFITS and PAGANS feel. Shouting vocals with the occasional "whoa". Pretty good for this kind of stuff. (RL)
(Dirty River Records, 4838 NE 40th Ave., Portland, OR 97211, www.trophywife.biz)

TRUE NORTH – "Somewhat Similar" LP
I remember some years ago being really stoked on TRUE NORTH – their split with RED SCARE was fucking great and so was the first LP on No Idea. Years later, I hate to say that I think TRUE NORTH has lost a bit of their urgency, their explosiveness of old, and has sadly joined the ranks No Idea's more mediocre bands. Not necessarily "bad" by any means, just disappointing when you consider how great the earlier material is. But then again, I guess these can always fall back on the fact that their band is members of 12 HOUR TURN, PALATKA and ASSHOLE PARADE, right? (SP)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

URBAN HEAD RAW – "Human Instinct" CD
Crust metal hardcore destruction from this Japanese trio. Crushing riffs, Cruise missile tempo, gruff vocals, the drums are clear and upfront, Discharge haiku as filtered through Japanese English. These guys will most likely become the heroes of the Japanese crust scene if they keep releasing material this strong. (WM).
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702, www.cahrecords.com)

USAK – "Roar" CD
Pretty raw, sloppy punk here. Sounds like everyone was wasted while this was being recorded, and it sounds like they had a lot of fun doing it. It sounds all blown out, like every level was red-lined. Cool! I think I even hear maracas on some of these songs. It's got a hint of an East Bay, CRIMPSHRINE, *Thing That Ate Floyd* sound to it too. I dig it. Internet stalking reveals that they're from Ohio. (AM)
(BFDM, www.usakonline.cjb.net)

UXA – "Illusions of Grandeur" LP
Here's a reissue of UXA's 1980 Posh Boy *Illusions of Grandeur* LP. This is a classic record featuring the vocals of female punk icon De Detroit. You've been looking for it and now here it is re-released (sort of, the label is Italian—so good luck finding it). UXA was on a lot of those old famous SF flyers featuring the DILS and the NUNS so you know their name. Don't sleep on this, UXA they were a great band—sounding like the AVENGERS sister band, their sound was remarkably similar and equally great. Get this (that is, unless you're really old and already have it). (AS)
(Get Back, 25-50069 Seici (Firenze), ITALY, www.abraxasrecords.com)

VOICE OF A GENERATION – "VOAG & OMFUG" EP
One original and two covers from this Swedish band. VOICE OF A GENERATION play tough street-punk and have already had some measure of success here through their releases on Burning Heart. They do good versions of PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES "Banned from the Pubs," and the RAMONES "Cretin Hop." (AD)
(Stereodrive, Von Streuben Str. 17, 48143 Munster, GERMANY)

THE VOIDS – "Kill a Generation" CD
Well, this is just wonderful. Heavily, heavily influenced by NAKED AGGRESION but with the greatness of some SUBMISSION HOLD and ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT thrown in. Musically, the tempo this band keeps up is SBITCH-like, but not as manic. I would whole-heartedly recommend this, but for the feeling of future doom I get when reading their thank you list: YOUTH BRIGADE, CH3, ILL REPUTE... (JA)
(www.drstrange.com)

VOLUME FOUR / COPROPHAGICS – split EP
We have another winner from Agromosh. VOLUME FOUR is pretty entertaining, ripping, shit-noise. Low- end rumble noise demented weirdly tuned guitar and muscular trash heap drumming. FEAR OF GOD—like buried in the mix "vocals" add to the chaos. I love it. Makes me wish I had some red wine and pills in me. They cover BLACK FLAG's "Depression" but you'd never suss it out. Four tracks (maybe five) in all; this is the perfect soundtrack to bad ideas. Noisecore weirdoes everywhere will enjoy this. COPROPHAGICS do the ultracore shit-noise thing. Fifteen tracks on their side. Shredding up front vocals, feedback squalls, insane drumming, and more low-end rumbling. A great listen but did not grab me like VOLUME FOUR. Fans of N.O.Y.F.B. will appreciate these guys. (RR)
(Agromosh, PO Box 2480, Escondido, CA 92033)

WARHEAD / ORDER – split EP
Both WARHEAD and ORDER blast their way through one rocking mid-tempo number each. It is pretty much what you are already expected. Loud wailing guitars, strong growling vocals... basically some rock solid punk from the land of Japan. The thing is, in the end I wish one of the bands would of turned up the speed on at least one of the songs. I mean, these songs rock, but they didn't really light a fire under my ass. (RC)
(HG Fact, 105, 2-7-15 Yayoi-cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN; interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact)

WOLFBRIGADE – "A D-Beat Odyssey" 12"
A D-Beat Odyssey?! What the fuck is that?! Yeash! What a fucking horrible record title, only made even worse by the rock 'n' roll gargoyle, worn from the elements, clutching its axe, perched high above the ruins of society. Ack. Now down to the music—which rips. Here we have what appears to be WOLFBRIGADE's final output, and while the heavy TRAGEDY influence that was so prevalent on the last album (especially with all the melodic leads and harmony bits) is still here, we find the 'BRIGADE returning more to their straight-up stripped down approach found in their earlier incarnation as WOLFPACK. Big-time MOTORHEAD meets traditional Swedish hardcore feel. Poffen from TOTALITÄR does guest vocals on a couple of tracks, which pushes them over the edge

into greatness. Overall a solid and powerful farewell release. (MT)

(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

WOLVES / AMPERE – split EP

I reviewed the TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR/WOLVES split LP a few months back and loved it, so I was stoked to see this record in my review bin this month. According to numerical order, these WOLVES songs came before the split LP, but seem to me just as good. Imagine a heavier version of the GREAT UNRAVELING mixed with ORCHID and you get the idea. Definitely good stuff. But AMPERE! Oh my god! How did I not know about this band before? Apparently also members of ORCHID, AMPERE here contributes five tracks that seem to me a good mixture of SAETIA-like chaotic precision and CONSTANTINE SANKATHI-like vocals and song dynamics. Very, very nice. Another awesome record from Moganono. (SP)

(Moganono, 82 Montague Rd., Amherst, MA 01002)

WOPTIME – "Mi Vida Loca" CD

Burly, NYHC style from Torino, Italy. Singer dude has got one of the gruffest voices I've heard in some time. Big, bruised, tattooed, chunky riffs and thick production with a flavor of street punk. CROMAGS fans might be into this. (WM)

(Brutus, via Stevani 5, 29100 Piacenza, Italy, www.brutusrecords.com)

V/A – "Bored Teenagers Vol. 3: Sixteen Great British Punk Originals" LP

Oh the joys off discovering more pogo wonders, the vaults seeming to be endlessly plundered spewing up more smirking jems. Definitely on the lighter side off the great British punk explosion crossing over to the fuzzy no mans land off when is a mod band a punk band and a punk band a power pop act. Very much in the same vain as the excellent *Mods, Odds, and Sods* comp and *This is Mod* series on Captain Mod records. Lesser none but yet highly worthwhile acts such as the PERFECTORS, the INJECTORS XPRESS, NO WAY and a host off equally similar sounding bands litter this fine piece off vinyl. Comes with an extensively researched and brilliantly conceived booklet, covering every act on this record. Get a history and get this LP. Brilliant. (SD)

(Bin Liner, PO Box 18, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9YU ENGLAND, www.detour-records.co.uk)

V/A – "Montreal Spirit" CD

A comp of Montreal bands and others with mostly unreleased stuff. Included are FIFTH HOUR HERO, ANN BERETTA, PLANET SMASHERS, the FRENETICS, and the HONOUR SYSTEM to name a few. (RL)

(Dare To Care Records, PO Box 463, Stn C, Montreal, QC, H2L 4K4, CANADA)

V/A – "Rip Off Records Third Wave of Hits" LP

I'm pretty sure that it's not cool to like Rip Off Records or the music they put out. I think it used to be cool, but now it's not. I guess I'm a sucker for that raw, pared down sound that is the common thread of everything I've ever heard that they have put out. I know I'm going against the grain, but some times you have to stand up and be counted. This LP features singles that they released in 1996 and 1997 by the INFECTIONS, the SWINDLERS, the SPASTICS, the REGISTRATORS and, my two personal favorites, the SPITES and the CHINESE MILLIONAIRES. Oh, and there's a little sticky note on the cover that says to be sure to mention that none of the bands will get a dime out of this. (KK)

(Rip Off, 581 Maple Ave., San Bruno, CA, 94066, www.ripoffrecs.org)

V/A – "Sweet Vision" EP

This is a decent release that encompasses seven different hardcore bands. The bands found here are RIGHTEOUS JAMS, SOS, SAY NO MORE, GET REAL, the WRONG SIDE, MENTAL and the JAGUARZ. All the tunes here are pretty straightforward and fast, and fortunately there is no metalcore shit to be found. The two standouts for me were the rocking tracks by SOS and MENTAL. So be sure to finger-point your way to the local distro and pick this up. (RC)

(Lockin Out, 91 Gordon St. #20, Brighton, MA 02135, www.lockinout.com)

V/A – "Tutti Pazzi, Vol. 5" LP

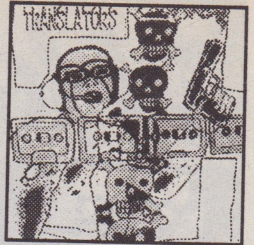
This is a compilation of what appears to be punk and post-punk from various Baltic states circa 1983-86. There's very little information beyond the band names and song titles, so it seems like it's probably a *Killed By Death*-type venture. I recognize very few of the band names, but there are tracks from PATARENI, PROCES, SOLUNSKI FRONT, GENERALI, and more. This is pretty interesting—all this stuff was happening on the other side of the iron curtain at the time—it would have been nice to see some more information or documentation. The sleeve just states, "For more information feel free to think about it." I guess I just have to use my imagination. (AM)

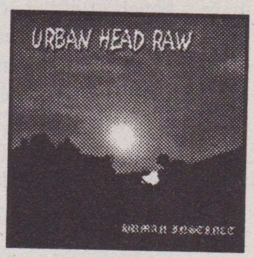
(FKO)

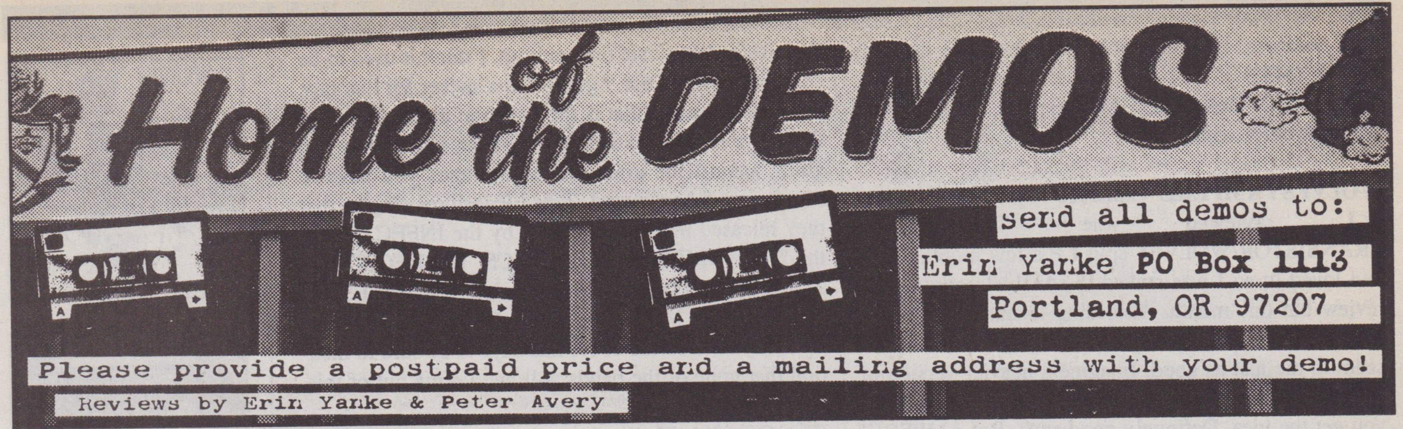
V/A – "Tutti Pazzi Vol. 6" LP

What you got here is a comp of Yugoslavian punk from 1983-1986. There's a bunch of different styles, some hits, some misses. You got the great droney and primitive 2 MINUTA MRZNIE (my favorite of this volume), to random spikey stuff, to borderline new wavey punk. It's all raw sounding, no doubt to the period and place that gave it life. As someone who finds enjoyment in the obscure, I must say that I consider 90% of this stuff to be aces. "We like to not be enjoyable." Too bad! (MC)

(FKO)







APE SHIT play in just short of screamo intensity. They break it down occasionally for more head banging moments, but for the most part speed along with reckless abandon. The vocals are all over the yelling range. They sing in the slower parts, and the back-ups yell along with them. ($2 ppd; 12 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 37, Centerville, MA 02632.)

ATOMIC INFLUX is in the tough girl-fronted bands class (L7, BABES IN TOYLAND, etc.). Pretty basic and cool slower tempoed punk rock and roll, that's produced enough to sound clean, but not lifeless. They have a bunch of guitar solo's happening, but the focus of the band is the vocals. She's got a great voice, and the band highlights it well. (8 song CD, lyrics included. 9/6 Thanon Mahidon, Mu Baan Chok Dee, Pa Det, Chiang Mai, Thailand.) (Erin)

BABYSHAKERS play bar punk. Three chord, mid-tempo songs with some guitar wanking. The lyrics are about g-strings and drinking. The songs are fairly monotonous and dull and the vocalist actually says "guitar" right before the guitar solo, more than once. (4 song CD, no lyrics, no info) (Peter)

BACK HANDERS play sloppy mid-tempo punk. The songs are pretty basic rock tunes despite the fact that they throw in plenty of guitar wanking. The vocals are deep, harsh and throaty and the backups are off key most of the time. The songs can be catchy at times, though. (5 song CD, with lyrics, back_handers@yahoo.co.uk) (Peter)

THE BALLISTICS are of the emo-hardcore sub-genre where you would also find KID DYNAMITE. Bits of catchiness come into play, but for the most part they know where they want to be and there's no pit stops on the way. There are a lot of words to these songs, and the lung capacity of the singer is impressive. ($5 ppd; 5 song CD, lyrics included. 1104 W. 4th St., Chico, CA 95928.) (Erin)

BLASTMAT and **SECOND CLASS CITIZEN** put out a demo together this month. BLASTMAT sounds like classic tough East Coast hardcore, with basic mid-tempo, driven by buzzy guitar, and a singer who is speak/shouting. SECOND CLASS CITIZEN is of the more modern hardcore times, more guttural in the vocal shouting, faster paced, and equally driven by guitar and drums. (8 songs by B, 7 by SCC, no lyrics included. PO Box 380152, East Hartford, CT 06138-0152.) (Erin)

BOMBENALARM sound real and vital. They play hardcore that comes out of punk rock, and not the metal world. The anger and urgency are there, in the fast paced, but solid drumming, the bass playing that adds to what's going on instead of just following the guitar, and the guitar that's straight forward and tough but also melodic. The vocals are sung and shouted at the same time, icing on the cake. Hell yeah. ($4 ppd; 8 song Cassette, lyrics included. c/o AZ, Averstr. 51, 45468 Mulheim, Germany.) (Erin)

CHAINBREAKER have a strong modern thrash sound that is powerful and rippin! They keep with the thrash part/thrash part/mosh part/thrash part song structure. They are totally driving and the shouted vocals propel you along as an equal part of things. This is quality thrash. (3 Euros. 18 song Cassette, lyrics included. Zeppelin Str. 26, 14471, Potsdam, Germany.) (Erin)

THE CUMMIES play 70s style punk along the lines of the STOOGES. Mid-tempo songs that are pretty basic in their conception. There are some interesting songs that are on the darker side and have a sound that is more similar to the slower MISFITS stuff. Altogether it's not bad but it gets a bit monotonous especially with the drawling but nasal vocals. (9 song CD, no lyrics, no info) (Peter)

THE DESCANSOS is a one-man band who specializes in lo-fi pop. The levels vary between songs, sometimes vocal dominated, and sometimes you can't hear anything behind that one keyboard or guitar. The sentiment is strongly present throughout. (17 song CD, lyrics included. 789 Dennison Ave. Apt #305, Columbus, OH 43215.) (Erin)

DICK CHENEY is not only a motherfucker of a vice president, it's a new-ish band from Sweden, playing hardcore punk that's got some groove. Musically, they're mid-paced, and have the dynamic moments of fist throwing as punctuation. The rhythm section has some good unity going on, creating a great base for the guitar and vocals. The singer is a shouter, using the universal language of hardcore. ($2 ppd; 4 song CD, no lyrics. Geografigrand 12B, 90732, Umea, Sweden.) (Erin)

DIE SCHEISE play fast and sloppy punk rock, with good vocals and driving music. It sounds like a mix of YOUTH GONE MAD (the songs with the female singer) and THE GR'UPS. The CD they sent me has some trouble playing, but they say the songs are free as mp3's from their web site. ($2 ppd; 4 song CD, lyrics included. 3300 Harrison St., 94616.) (Erin)

THE EIGHTY SIX LIST sound like the world where THE BOUNCING SOULS never got slick, and East Bay punk never got famous. They have the deep voiced singing, ska influence, and rock structure to pay tribute to those bands, but also have the basement vibe that reality knocked out of those scenes. (13 song CD, lyrics included. 59-092 Kam Hwy, Haleiwa, HI 96712.) (Erin)

THE FOXX is really just a rock band. They play a fairly aggressive style of early to mid '70 British rock (I don't believe they are British themselves). Mid-tempo songs with a semi clean guitar sound. There are some catchy tunes and the interplay of the female and male vocals works well. (7 song CD, no lyrics, no place to call home, www.thefoxx.com) (Peter)

GASMASK TERROR encapsulates the fire and fervid energy of hardcore that I love. Fast, but with time to dance in the break-it-down parts, and simple but not boring. This is also a great tape because there was no mixing, and the balance is amazing. The drums are probably louder than the guitar geeks would like, but I am not of that camp. ($2 plus postage. 6 song Cassette, lyrics included. Luc Ardilouze, B.P. 11, 33023 Bordeaux Cedex, France.) (Erin)

GODS AMONG MEN bust out nine long, brutal songs. They play messy, grinding hardcore with cello (something I'm not usually fond of but it works here). They mix

the songs up with some quieter parts that are then attacked by sloppy, thrashy hardcore. The two vocalist work well with the music, one sounding like Siouxsie and the other being a strait out screamer. The songs tend to be too long at times but they change them up enough to keep it interesting for the most part. (9 song CD, with lyrics, www.godsamoungmen.net) (Peter)

THE HOFNER BANG ACCOUNT is a French band that sings in English. They give you a mix of musical styles on this CD. The first song is their best, sounding similar to THE LAPSE (with the guy singing). The band goes on to play mostly catchy, rock'n, pop songs with a twangy guitar and off key vocals. They then end the CD with, "Spartacus Rise Up in a McDonald's", which is a strait up punk song. This is really worth checking out as long as you can ignore the semi-rap attempt on one of the songs. (6 song CD, no lyrics, 12 rue Chabrier, 13100 Aix-en-Provence, France, hofnerbangaccount@yahoo.com) (Peter)

NO TRIGGER plays a pretty well polished, melodic style of hardcore. Most of it is fast and aggressive but there are some pop punk elements to the songs, especially on track two where the song switches between strait up pop punk and screaming hardcore several times. The songs are fairly strait forward but there are enough hooks to keep it interesting. They just need to decide what kind of band they want to be. (4 song CD, with lyrics, without a place to lay their heads, www.notrigger.org) (Peter)

NUCKLEHEAD are still going along at their basic fast punk rock that sounds like great Ohio rock, a la THE NEW BOMB TURKS. They are more snotty, and a bit less wild, but the energy and power is comparable. ($2 ppd; 5 song CD, no lyrics included. 660 Justice Rdg. Rd., Candler, NC 28715.) (Erin)

OF FAITH AND FIRE play an equal mix of tough and emo hardcore, with the vocals creating the bridge, being at home in either camp with the shouting style. The backups, however, are strictly tough guy group shouting. ($2 ppd;5 song CD, lyrics included. 4864 Yuma Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89104.) (Erin)

PRIMODIAL is in the school of hardcore metal, or metallic hardcore. This has all the eerie whispering and straight-from-hell vocals, fancy guitar work, and double bass of the metal world, borrowing the pace from hardcore and the timing of changing said pace. ($4 ppd; 10 song CD, lyrics included. 23 Alger Dr., Rochester, NY 14624.) (Erin)

RED HANDS play lo-fi basement hardcore. They've got a shouting guy on vocals, over mostly mid-tempo parts that morf into super fast bits, or chug along at the same pace. Their plus side: they have good group back ups, and have variety within the form. ($3 ppd; 7 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 4744, Portland, ME 04122.) (Erin)

SHALL BE JUDGED wears crossover metal on their sleeve. Sure, there's some hardcore here, but not much. They've even got the vocals down, holding out that last note of the phrase and raising the vocal pitch. ($5 ppd; 5 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 293, Cottage Grove, MN 55016.) (Erin)

SHOTGUN DEMOCRACY play songs that sound like a mix between NYC tough guy hardcore and PENNYWISE (especially in the vocals). Strange? Well yes but I don't lie. Even though the songs are fast and pretty heavy, there is a lot of that melodic hardcore sound going on as well as some attempts to harmonize on the backing vocals. The second song, "S.S.O.L.", is by far the best due the fact that it is short, fast and they stick to an aggressive hardcore format. (5 song CD, no lyrics, www.shotgundemocracy.com) (Peter)

SLOWA WE KRWI play an artistic sort of emo-hardcore, with hints of unusual guitar moments which stand out as sweet and beautiful. Mostly the band is driving and straight-forward, while the vocals are pissed off and compelling, male and female vocal trade off. The packaging is beautiful, and they include the lyrics in multiple languages, which is totally bad ass. Thank You. (4 Euros ppd; world. 13 song Cassette, lyrics included. Trujaca Fala, PO Box 13, 81-806 Sopot 6. Poland.) (Erin)

STRT SPRX play lo-fi keyboard led rock. The tempo is mostly slow, and the vocals are loud. The singing styles vary, with mostly a "narrator" voice as the primary vocalist. They have many different styles of shouting for the back ups. They sound like a party band, and include retro early 90's jokes (homage to NATION OF UYLSSES, etc.) but they have strong politics that are laid out in the zine that is included. ($3 with zine. 6 song cassette, no lyrics included. 1122 E. Pike St. #1037, Seattle, WA 98122.) (Erin)

THE SUSPICION are a basic three chord power pop band. The songs are catchy and the lady vocals are sung without much venom, but lots of oomph. (3 song CD, no lyrics included. 425 Boylston Ave. E., Seattle, WA 98102.) (Erin)

THIEVERY brings some rawness back into the realm of darker hardcore. This shit is fast and furious. The vocals sound like he's almost suffocating. The overall sound is comparable to a live show where you are standing in the sweet spot, rough and true. ($2. 4 song CD, lyrics included. 13446 Sun Valley Cir. Victorville, CA 92392.) (Erin)

TOTAL ANNIHILATION is a mohawk wearing street punk band that is so over the top that I can't tell if they are a joke or for real. Take this for example, the song "Boot Party" goes, "Boots on our feet, there's no retreat, we get our justice on the street". Regardless, some of the songs stick to your basic mid-tempo street punk while most go for a faster and more hardcore sound (maybe a little like POISSON IDEA). Nothing new but on the whole it's not bad. (9 song CD, some lyrics, www.commies.8m.com) (Peter)

VILENTLY ILL doesn't change much over the demos, and this I think is a good thing. A one man band who sounds full on punk rock, screaming and ranting over a mid-paced to fast music bed that's simple and rough. This is a tour demo, so I guess watch for him in your town. ($3. 9 song Cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 501, South Haven, MI 49090.) (Erin)

VIVISUCK play tough and mean punk rock. The music is on the fast side of mid-paced, with good strong distorted guitar without fancy finishing touches. The vocals, dual male and female, are like the neighbors having a fight and when you walk by they find common ground by yelling at you! (I like this much better on tape than in real life.) They have growling undertones, which only occasionally go over the top and sound metallic. This is also when they overpower the music in the mix. ($1 ppd; 5 song CD, lyrics included. 930 Sudubon, East Lansing MI 48823.) (Erin)

WEISENHEIMER definitely have their heart in rock and roll, and play their stuff with the drive, and attitude of good rockin bands. This doesn't differentiate from those basics, but is much faster, and of course, meaner than regular rock. The vocals have a crooning edge to their yelling. This is a best of compilation, so you will probably get some repeat songs if you have any of their stuff. ($4 ppd; 27 song Cassette, no lyrics. 2412 Colgate Ave., Bradenton FL 34207.) (Erin)

***Cleveland, Aint it Fun* Vol. 2** is a compilation of all Cleveland bands, as you may have guessed. It comes as a CDR but apparently the whole thing can be downloaded for free. Most of the bands are pretty strait out punk with pop leanings. There are a tone of bar punk bands but I'll just mention some of the better stuff on here. COFFINBERRY has a great song that is sort of emo and sort of pop with drawling vocals making the whole thing sound a lot like NUZZLE did on their last record. THE UNKNOWN sound like a mix between DISCOUNT and early GREEN DAY and THIS IS EXPLODING has a sort of quirky pop tune that is catchy as hell. If you are into the internet, there are a couple songs worth getting from this. (16 song CD, no lyrics, www.cleveland-aintitfun.com) (Peter)

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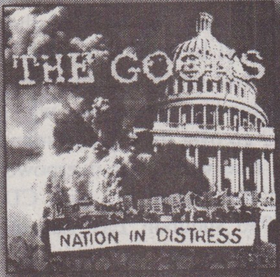

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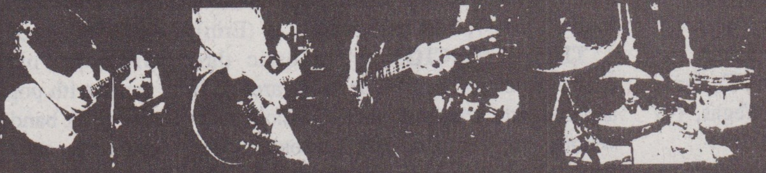

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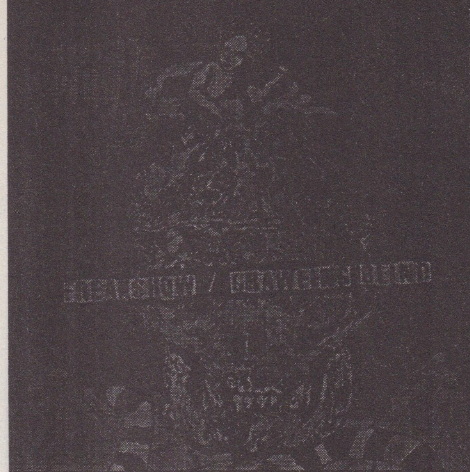
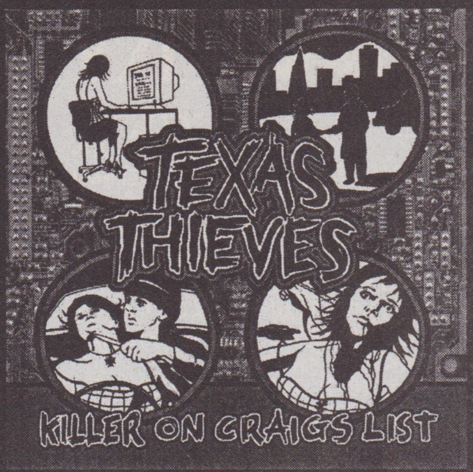

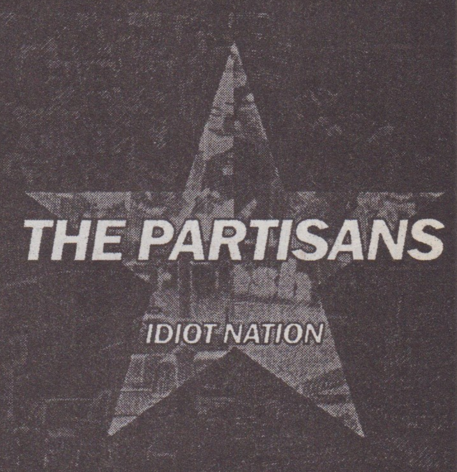

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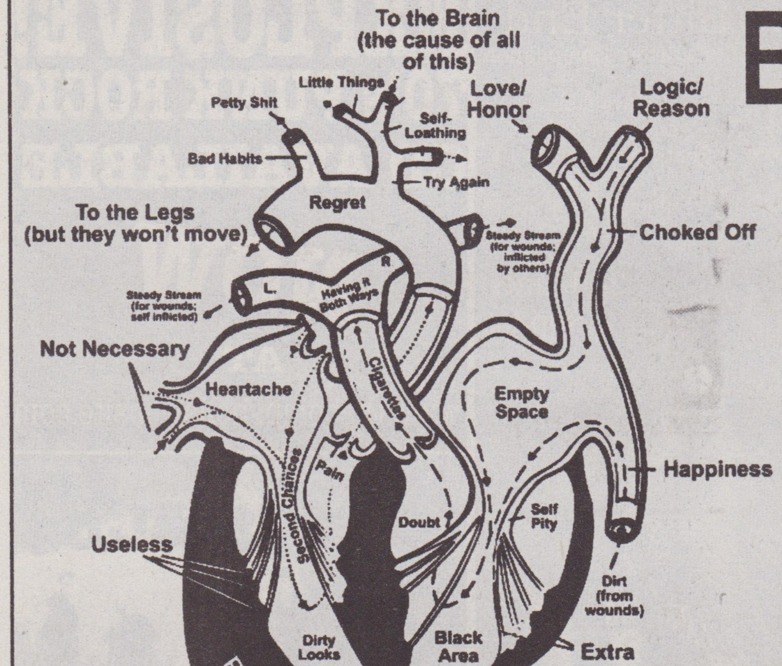

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ZINES

Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (BD) Ben Ditch, (MF) Maree Faygo, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (CH) Cassie Harwood, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JP) Joshua Peach, (CQ) Cooper Quintin, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ANTI-PANTS #8 / $1 or trade
8.5 x 11 - copied - 38 pgs
The first thing I noticed about this zine is it's called *Anti-Pants* and the pictures of the girls who wrote it clearly show them wearing pants. Haha! What in the world. This zine reminds me of being in 8th grade again and after I read it I felt really awkward and unsure just like I did in middle school! Weird man. This issue has interviews with The Shemps and Trepanation, reviews of a bunch of Epitaph stuff, a bunch of comics, and even a "Stud Muffin Contest". There are a few things in this zine I didn't really get like this one weird comic strip where this guy walks up to a woman breastfeeding and tears the baby off her breasts, and then proceeds to lick her chest. This zine reminds me of one of those zines you find in this box of free zines from like 1992 and you take it home and it's pretty cool so you give it to your friend and maybe they like it too. (CH)
PO Box 3950 / San Dimas, CA. 91773
antipantszine@yahoo.com

BALD CACTUS #22 / 50p
5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 32 pgs
Opinionated, for sure. The questions asked of Conflict are the most confrontational I've seen in some time, and the answers aren't real detailed or convincing. Active Minds and Indicator get gentler handling; the 'Minds get a good talk, while the other is cut a little short. Ads no, reviews yes, including a special section for bands that sound like Leatherface ("the new Discharge?"). If I lived in Leeds, I'd get every issue. (JM)
c/o 145-149 Cardigan Rd / Leeds / LS6 1LJ / United Kingdom

BOB #3 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 32 pgs
Bob the magazine and Bob the person are both very political. The layout is great. I really enjoyed the article on Bert Katz. Bob keep doing what you're doing. You are doing it well. (MF)
Outhouse Publishing / 30 Locust Avenue / Westmont, NJ / 08108

CITIZINE #5 / no info
8.5 x 11 - printed - 60 pgs
Glossy covered interview zine. Bands that used to be cool, but then had lame reunions to cash in on their past include Dead Kennedys, and Descendents. Then there's a long interview with Tommy Ramone. He seems like a jackass. All the interviews are conducted over the telephone, seemingly unedited and basically come off as a bunch of ass kissing. However, if you are interested in what these washed up rockers have to say, check it out. Also includes record reviews and a pinch of politics.(BD)
2513 W 4th St / Los Angeles, CA 90057

THE EAST VILLAGE INKY #23 / $2
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 40 pgs
It's been a while since I last read *The East Village Inky*, the little monsters that once terrorized the author, are growing up fast, but continuing their reign of terror. Ayun takes a little break to travel to Japan with Greg for a tour with Urinetown and leaves the monsters behind. This issue has less kids and more travel, but for those of you who can't sleep without knowing how they're doing, there's plenty of anecdotes detailing their growing up and getting into trouble. Mostly a travel zine this time around, but with enough odd stories to make me snicker out loud a few times. Oh yeah and some fancy Japanese recipes. (CR)
PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202
www.ayunhalliday.com

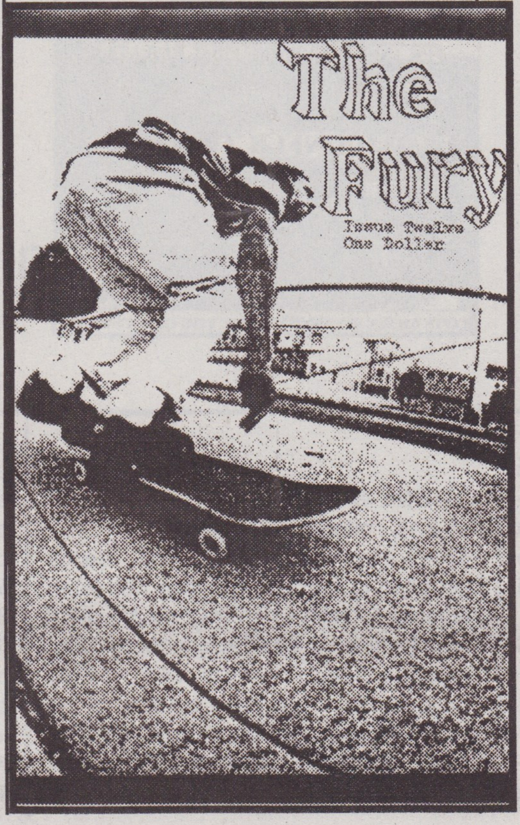
FRAIL ROOTS # 2 / trade
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 40 pgs
It seems that the most important reason to publish a personal zine is to share with others the little struggles and adventures that make a person's life unique and well...personal. Frail Roots contains stories that fail to go into depth or reveal much of the writers life. What is included seems disjointed and unclear. It's not that the writing or content is bad, it just doesn't go very deep. I'd like to see the next issue have fewer stories that go further in depth. In the meantime, this zine is probably one that his friends, and the people close to him will appreciate and enjoy. For the rest of us, we should look forward to the next issue. (CR)
Kyle 136 Tanglewood Dr / Longview, WA 98632

THE FURY / ANTHEMS FOR A DOOMED YOUTH #12 / $1/trade
8.5x5.5 - copied - 36 pgs
The Fury is a cute cut and paste style zine with personal articles and record reviews, also a hilarious article on how to be a serial killer. Good layout too. *Anthem For A Doomed Youth* is a memorial issue for Matt Lazzara and there is a letter written by him which is worth getting this zine. (CQ)
Mark Novotny / 5413 6th Ave / Countryside, IL / 60525

GREEN ANARCHY #16 Spring 2004 / $4
8.25 x 10.5 - printed - 80 pgs
Another issue of this well-constructed magazine continues the anti-civilization/primitivist side of the ongoing discussion, filled to the brim with articles on anarchist theory and action. I am quite impressed at how good this looks, the time and energy put into this shows. This issue features the third volume of a continuing series "Back to Basics." It talks about rewilding, and is a bit of a survival guide for gathering the physical and mental skills needed to rely less on technology, whether that be growing food, harvesting herbs or getting in touch with the animal side of ourselves. Other highlights include direct action reports, political prisoner news, letters, reviews and a report back from the 2004 BASTARD conference that was held here in the Bay Area. (JP)
PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR / 97440
collective@greenanarchy.org

HERE TO STAY, HERE TO FIGHT Vol. 2 #2 / $1?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 12 pgs
Okay, shaved heads on boys is a *really* good look, and I love some of the classic Oi! bands. But why be a skinhead? Even if you're going to be a left-wing one. What is the point? To me, it just seems like another dumb boy's club, and plus, why purposely try to look just like something you hate. It would be like punks dressing up like cops all the time, and then wondering why people call them fascists. Anyway, there is a list of the fifteen essential skinhead albums (three are Clash albums, two are Oppressed albums, and three are Blaggers records, so it's not much of a list really). There's some information on skinhead problems in the Portland area in the late 80s/early 90s, a Montreal skin scene report, and a listing of records, videos and zines for sale. Personally, if you're going to claim to be political and left wing, it would be nice to see some true political information in here, and more information as to what all these boys are "fighting" and struggling against. (MD)
PO Box 364 / Canal St Station / New York, NY 10013-0364

IT'S ALL GRAVY! #6 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied – 20 pgs
Ah ha! A DIY photocopied zine. I knew I'd get one eventually. This is a zine focused on the LA street punk/ska scene. The underground back yard show variety. It's pretty good too. That scene is not exactly my thing, but I like the idea. This is the opinion/rant issue where columnists "go off" about whatever it is that really annoys them. The theme is followed loosely. Mostly it is just show reviews, but if you are interested in the LA backyard ska scene, check it out punk! (BD)
no address



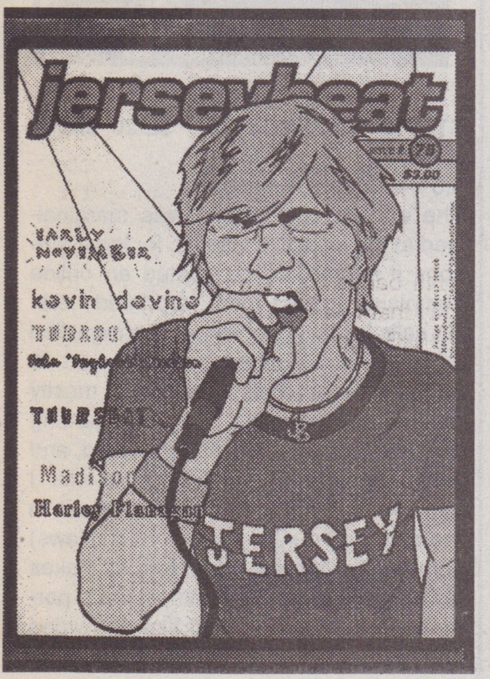
JERSEY BEAT #75 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 172 pgs
I've always admired Jersey Beat for its long-standing place in the punk music scene, and the fact that it has always focused on music and not dwindled into some bad quasi-rightwing or anti-pc rag. That said, it's a little disturbing to see how many of the bands covered here are on major labels (or were, or want to be), along with talk of getting famous and managers and legal teams and band makeovers (I only wish I were kidding). Maybe it's time to reprint the major labels issue…I don't know, this issue left a bad taste in my mouth and made me sad. Lots of interviews and reviews with bands who don't have much to say that I want to hear. (MD)
418 Gregory Ave / Weehawken, NJ 07086

MELTING WING #1 & 2 / free in person
8.5 x 11 - printed - 32 & 40 pgs
A freebie you'd find in a record store, the first issue has some nice photos but the huge print and generic questions in the interviews make them seem like filler. For sure there are ads

and reviews. The second issue has the same format but a few of the talks are of more substance, e.g. Hugs, Harper's Ferry Arsenal, Happy Couples Never Last, and the Locust, while the quantity and quality of photos is lower. I'd pick up the second issue for free but would recycle it quickly. (JM)
Luke Shumard / Pinnacle Systems / 7340 Shadeland Station / Indianapolis, IN 46256

MODERN, ARIZONA #5 /$1/$2/Trade
8.5x 5.5 - copied - 40 pgs
This is the car issue. Decently written stories about Joe's experiences with cars, planes, and trains. These are complimented by a good cut and paste layout and zine reviews. Although I am not interested in cars at all, this zine held my interest. (CQ)
Joe Unseen / POB 494 / Brewster, NY / 10509 (CQ)

NERVE #3 / Free
8.25 x 11.75 - printed - 32pgs
This is exactly what the cover says it is, a grassroots magazine about social issues, arts and culture. Coming from a lefty/liberal slant, most of the issues deal with things close to the UK. The feel of this magazine is much like a community bulletin board, lots of little blurbs and blips, loosely tied together, but with not much depth or focus. The readability was a bit of a challenge with articles smashed up against one another. At times, it was hard to tell when one feature ended and another began. With the amount of money that went into this, glossy pages and all, a little more time could be spent on the layout/graphic design end of things. The cover says that it is free, but you should probably write the editors if you live outside of the UK for postage costs. (JP)
catalystmedia@mersinet.co.uk



THE NEUS SUBJEX #61 / free?
8.5x3.5 - copied - 16 pgs
What can I say about this zine except that it's comprised entirely of record reviews and music news. This issue includes pictures of Mark Chapman's .38 Caliber (a band) and deeply explores Thee Shams (also a band) new CD, *Pleasure Yourself*. This zine keeps it short and sweet. Cool dude. (CH)
PO Box 18051 / Fairfield, OH. 45018
www.NeusSubjex.net

ON FIRE #4 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 74 pgs
At my work they have this canned air with a really long coffee stirrer spout that is used to get the dust out of tiny crevices (instead of letting the crevices just be, as they are) and the writing in this zine reminds me of the tiny dust particles that fly out when I use it. I mean really, I need fucking glasses and strong light to read that shit. Luckily for my troubles I am rewarded with the kinds of reviews that delve into history lessons and rants, the kinds that really show the personality of the reviewer and give you a real sense of a record, not just "bone-crushing hardcore" like Steve wouldn't stop yelling at Ballast on Monday night. There isn't enough rambling, everything is coherent and thought out, devised to sting in some ways and inclusive and fist pumping in others. I'm content now with my faded eyesight. (JB)
Daniel / PO Box 469 / Wollongong University / NSW 2500 / Australia

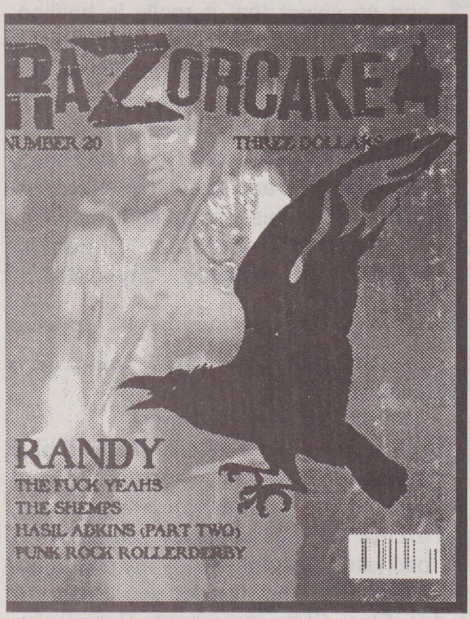
THE PUTANG INA MO #1 / free
8.5 x 11 - copied - 4 pgs
I want candy. This lil' zine is so short and so sweet that it really is baffling. Here we have an interview with Lasting Values, the band, and The Way of the Warrior zine. The sentiment reads through without explanation, this zine is by a kid, for the kids. Communication, learning,, DIY and staying involved are all themes in this tiny small thing. (JB)
Jay Garcia / Cluster-M, Lot-72 / Bagong Nayon 1 / Antipolo City 1870 / Philippines

RANCID NEWS #6 / $4, 1 pound (UK) or trade
8.5 x 11 - printed - 112 pgs
I've reviewed this before. It's kind of a British *MRR* I guess, the same kind of layout and format and everything, except this has a glossy cover. Not a bad issue, but not exactly my cup of tea either. But it may be for you if you like Anti Flag, Strike Anywhere, Submission Hold or Give Up The Ghost to name but a few of the bands interviewed in this issue. Aside from all the interviews we have a bunch of fairly well written and interesting columns, a little news section and then of course the zine and record reviews. (BD)
PO Box 382 / 456 The Strand / WC2R 00Z / United Kingdom

RAUMSCHIFF WUCHERPREIS #14 / $3
8 x 11 - printed - 60 pgs - German
This fanzine is basically a catalogue loaded with record reviews and ads. There are a couple of interviews, articles and gig reviews. But overall this fanzine is best for checking out just what is new, and what you want to add to your punk rock record collection. Highly recommended! (HH)
Schmitz / Postfach 100709 / 46527 Dinslaken / Germany
www.scumfuck.de

RAZORCAKE #20 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 112 pgs
My favorite part of this issue is the Snakepit column. It's the first time I've seen it and duh, of course if it is Ben it has to be a comic, but that shouldn't dis-

tract anyone from the brilliance of a comic column. Why ever should I read another words column when I can have a comic column? Next up is the interview on the Arizona Roller Derby, although the first 8 minutes of reading only clued me in on crowd size and fashion choices, and I kept guessing on what a roller derby even *is*. The clever thing about the presentation of information lacking explanation is that the order that the information



arrives is the same order that these girls used in starting to put on these skating events. It sounds clumsy and awesome. The rest of this issue is you know, reviews n shit, interviews n shit, and to my dismay, a Rich Mackin endorsement from Maddy, whom I thought I could trust. (JB)
Razorcake / PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042

RIOT 77 #7 / 3 Euros
8.5 x 11 - printed - 50 pgs
Riot 77 fucking rules. The pages are beautiful. This is a badass music magazine from Dublin, Ireland. Ok, so you have the typical record, book, and DVD reviews that come along with this genre of magazine, however, there is something not so typical here. Killer interviews with killer bands are, what you get. We're talking, interviews with dudes such as Jerry A of Poison Idea, Frankie Stubbs of Leatherface, and the legendary Marky Ramone of The Ramones, just as a sample. You will be cooler if you own this magazine. (MF)
31 St Patricks Pk / Clondalkin / Dublin 22 / Ireland

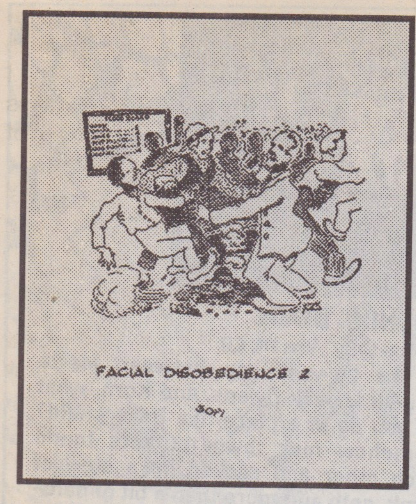
ROCKTOBER #38 / $4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 112
Fuck man, *Rocktober* always rules—totally obsessive, totally nerdy and totally what a fanzine *should* be. This time around the fine folx of *Rocktober* bring us the greatest rocknroll moments in television history. Wading through the dense page after page of text we treated to descriptions of rockers on the tube, rockers in the movies, thoughts about television and rocknroll—and did you know Lee Ving (uh, you know from Fear) was on *Who's The Boss?* In addition to being the slimey ticket scalper in the TV version of *Fast Times At Ridgemont High*—fuck, I didn't even know there *was* a TV version! Great as always, and certain to provide hours of quality bathroom reading. (MT)
1507 E 53rd St #617 / Chicago, IL 60615

SHIRLEY PUNKS ON HOPE / FACIAL DISOBEDIENCE #2 / $1 or trade
5 x 8 - copied - 28 pgs
Split zine from the United Kingdom—where they call fries, chips and chips, crisps. What a weird place, but I digress. *Shirley Punks On Hope* details Jamie's travels around the world in a strange notated format. Little bursts of thought and information about the goings on from San Francisco to Melbourne. It takes some getting used to at first, but it's cool after you get into it. Nice layout too—totally clip-art filled and cut'n'paste yet clean style. On the flip (and you do have to flip it) we have *Facial Disobedience*, which I enjoyed a bit more—mainly given it's easier to digest narrative format. Thoughts and observations written in a nice conversational tone. Good stuff. Oh yeah, Phil *Facial* prefers trades, so send him your zine in trade. (MT)
Phil Chokeword c/o *Suspect Device* / PO Box 295 / Southhampton / 5017 1 LW / United Kingdom

SQUARE ONE AGAIN / VOICES WAKE US #2 / #11 / stamp
8.5 x 11 - copied - 10 pgs
Split zine (duh) between these two New Yorkers—*Square One Again* (brought to you by future *MRR* coordinator Golnar) contains well written, and thought out discussions of the new records by Harum Scarum, Kylesa, Gorilla Angreb plus some thoughts on the classic Yugoslavian punk band UBR. Good stuff. On the flip we have *Voices Wake Us*, which is thankfully devoid of shitty metal this time around, and instead is chocked full of Ben's standard verbose and highly opinionated reviews of recent punk releases, in addition to an essay regarding Rudimentary Peni's classic *Death Church* LP. Well done as usual, though I question Ben's review of the Uranus discography as "plodding." Are you out of your fucking mind? (MT)
5290 Lerner Hall / New York City, NY 10027

STRAINT #8 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Issue numero eight of *Straint* features a detailed article that serves both as a how to and in advocacy of shaving ones genitals, a short essay on 50s actress Gina Lollobrigidia and much more. Well written and surprisingly interesting, especially given I wasn't looking too forward to reading about someone shaving their scrotum. (MT)
Lane Van Ham / 1141 E Adams #6 / Tuscon, AZ 85719

STUPID JOURNEY #5 / $2-20 sliding scale
5.5 x 8 - copied - 48pgs
The editor's collage film was marginalized at the local film festival, for legal reasons it seems, so he posted an online complaint against them, reprinted here. He calls for "fair use" films to be regarded as a valid and legal art form. The next 40 pages are responses he received, mostly from other filmmakers. The law regarding "fair use" in Canada is never quoted, and respondents offer conflicting reports. I can see that this is an important issue in the arts (and punk—see the *MRR* News) community, but the bland format makes for a crappy zine. It is a benefit for "a permanent punk rock/activist film and video archive," hence the unusual price. Also



included was issue #4, which is smaller, costs $3, and details the editor's trip to a horrible rock festival. Just reading about it was a bad experience. (JM)
Satan Macnuggit Popular Arts / 3584 John St / Vineland Station / Ontario, L0R 2E0 / Canada
www.satanmacnuggit.com

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #173 / $3
6 x 8 - printed - 32 pgs - Finnish
This small fanzine includes interviews with the bands Turbostaat and Haarakiila. There are also some articles on the Finnish punk scene, a gig listing and plenty of new record reviews. This is a great fanzine for anyone interested in the Finnish scene. (HH)
PL 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
www.punkinfinland.net/tv

TONES & NOTES #1 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 12 pgs
I like the concept of learning things in new ways and in ways alternative to traditional schooling. The idea behind this zine seems to be to teach music theory. I couldn't make heads or tails of this...and I've been playing music for a few years now. It was hard to understand (not many graphics to help support the ideas), hard to read (the small, cramped print doesn't help) and just...very dry! No substitution for music lessons (or better yet, just playing and learning by ear). (MD)
PO Box 190 / Philomath, OR 97370

TRUST #106 / $5
8 x 11 - printed - 68 pgs - German
This is another brilliant issue of this long running fanzine from Germany. This edition has plenty to offer, the highlight being a five-page interview with *MRR*'s own Mike Thorn. In the interview Mike does a great job of explaining what *MRR* means to the current punk scene, and the values of DIY. Also in this edition there are interviews with the bands Box Car Satan, Gregor Samsa, and Revelation, There are also the usual columns, loads of new record reviews, lots of cool ads, and of course the best German gig listing anywhere. (HH)
Dolf Hermannstaedter / Postfach 110762 / 28087 Bremen / Germany
www.trust-zine.de

UNDER THE VOLCANO #79 / $3.95
8.25 x 10.5 - printed - 52 pgs
Basically a Long Island institution, this music magazine has been around forever. The content follows a pretty standard format, columns, interviews and reviews. The columns are too short and don't say much, they should either be cut or expanded. The interviews are decent; they keep your interest and are worth reading. This issue's interviews are with Anterrabae, Dearly Departed, Most Precious Blood, Youngblood Records and Stand and Fight. The cover price seems a little steep for the contents inside, with about half of the pages being occupied with reviews. (JP)
PO Box 236 / Nesconset, NY / 11767
www.underthevolcano.net

UP MAGAZINE #15 / $7
8 x 11 - printed - 60 pgs - Dutch
This fanzine contains lots of interviews including Young Heart Attacks, Descendents, Bad Religion, Zeke, Pro-

Pain, The Bones, The Riplets, UK Subs, and others. There are also lots of record reviews and plenty of ads. And of course the fanzine comes with its customary free CD sampler. (HH)
Postbus 4269 / 5604 EG Eindhoven /

Netherlands
www.upmagazine.nl

WHAT'S UP BRA?! #1 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
This zine really has a lot to offer and is very entertaining. The editors, Beth, Katy, Julie, and Megon, through together quite a few vegan recipes, some rad photos, book reviews, record reviews, and a few real great articles, all wrapped up in a beautifully screen printed cover. Oh, and let's not forget the totally sick interviews with Candace from Walls of Jericho and Issa of Good Clean Fun. The layout is decent. Definitely worth checking out. (MF)
3306 Lemp / St Louis, MO / 63118
whatsupbra@hotmail.com

WHAT'S UP BRA?! #2 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 56 pgs
I love this issue of *What's Up Bra?!* The covers of both of the issues sent in are beautifully screen printed with bras on them, go figure. The layout is better than the first issue. Issue two is packed with more great articles, vegan recipes, and a crossword puzzle. Buy issues one and two today. (MF)
3306 Lemp / St Louis, MO / 63118
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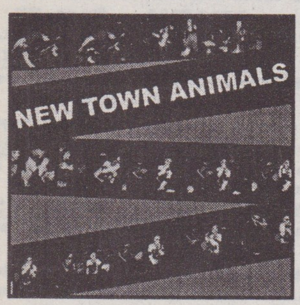

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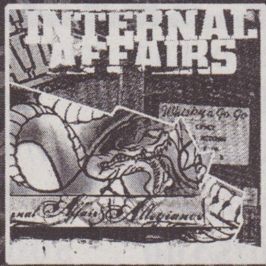

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FAR LEFT LIMIT - EP
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INFECT - LP
From Brasil...political, all female fast hardcore. Fucking awesome!

LIFE SET STRUGGLE - EP
6 songs of fast skate-core

THEY LIVE - LP
Insane fastcore from Buffalo.

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MACHINEGUN ROMANTICS - EP
Fast as fuck HC from Texas....

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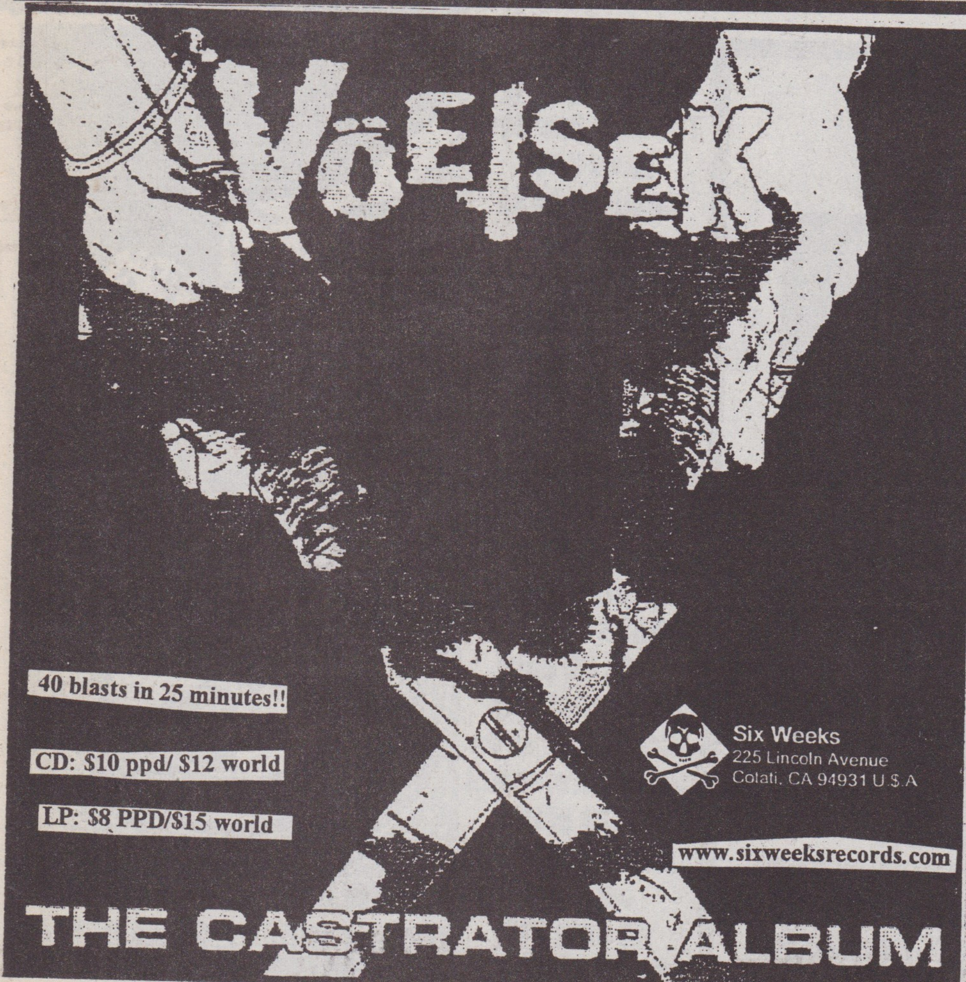

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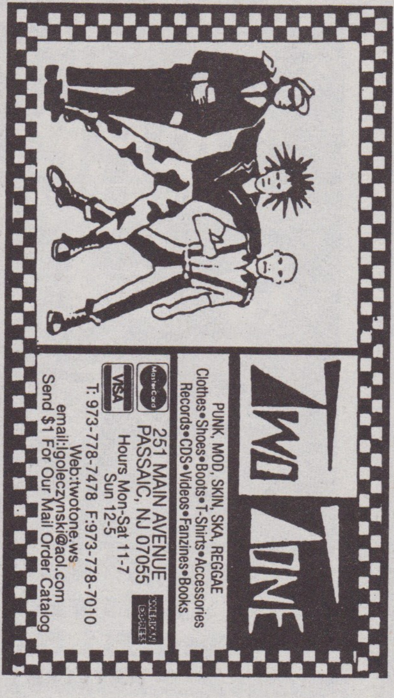

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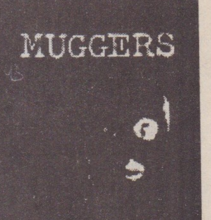

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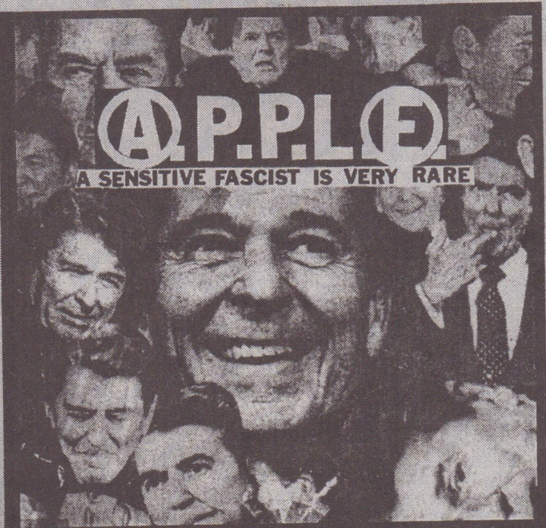

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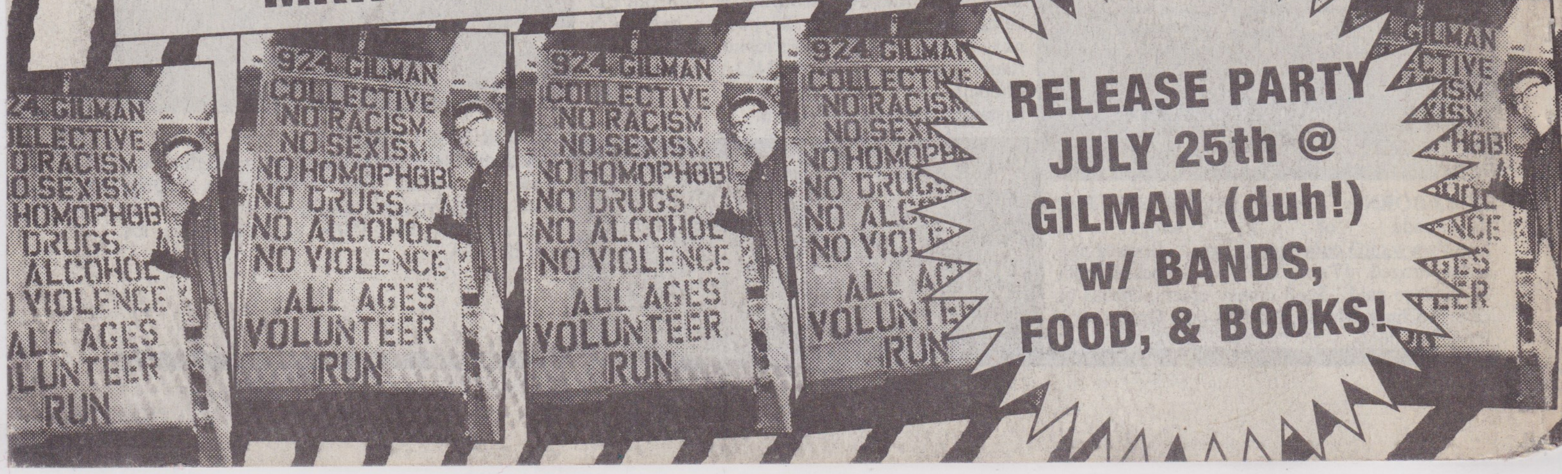

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